

# COHESION IN MULTINATIONAL MILITARY UNITS

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## ABSTRACT

COHESION IN MULTINATIONAL MILITARY UNITS, by Captain Bojan Langerholc, 135 pages.

Several studies have described the relationship between leadership and cohesion, albeit not within a multinational context. Previous researchers have also identified a variety of factors that appear to influence the performance of multinational units. The literature has yet to address how a military leader can foster multinational unit cohesiveness.

This research describes the importance of unit cohesion and how it can be fostered in multinational units. Using synthesis of findings from document study and the oral group interview data this thesis develops a framework whose key factors include (a) the conditions that exist in cohesive units and (b) the qualities and the tools that might help leaders facilitate a small multinational unit's cohesion.

Unit cohesion evolves from mutual loyalty, trust, and compatibility of norms, values, and goals of all unit members. Leadership in multinational units is different than leadership in homogeneous units in many areas. Leaders of multinational units may cultivate unit cohesion if they exhibit interpersonal and emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and adaptable leadership style.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACRONYMS.....	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background.....	1
Primary Research Question .....	5
Secondary Research Questions .....	6
Assumptions.....	6
Definitions of Key Terms .....	6
Limitations .....	8
Delimitations.....	8
Significance .....	8
Summary and Conclusions .....	9
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
Introduction.....	10
Civilian Literature.....	10
Military Literature.....	19
Directing Leadership Style.....	26
Participating Leadership Style .....	26
Delegating Leadership Style .....	27
Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles.....	27
Summary and Conclusions .....	29
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	31
Introduction.....	31
Obtaining Necessary Information .....	32
Feasibility of Method.....	33
Historical Examples from the Field .....	35
Observations from the Gulf War.....	35
Observations from Bosnia.....	36
Observations from Kosovo .....	38

Observations from Afghanistan .....	40
Observations from Lebanon.....	41
Moroccan Army Experience .....	42
Homosexuality in the Multinational Environment .....	43
Other Historical Examples .....	44
Validity and Credibility of the Research .....	45
Summary and Conclusions .....	46
 CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS .....	 47
Introduction.....	47
Secondary Question 1: What is Cohesion?.....	47
Secondary Question 2: What Particular Factors Must a Leader Consider While Facilitating Cohesion in a Multinational Unit?.....	52
Cultural Differences .....	53
Organizational Factors .....	55
Personnel Differences .....	57
Situational Factors .....	59
Leadership.....	61
Secondary Question 3: How Does National Heterogeneity Influence Cohesion and Performance in Multinational Units?.....	63
Secondary Question 4: What are the Qualities of a Multinational Leader? .....	70
Secondary Question 5: What are the Tools of a Multinational Leader?.....	79
Primary Question: Given a Multinational Battalion or Lower, How Might a Leader Facilitate Cohesion in Multinational Units? .....	86
Gaining Awareness .....	87
Developing Understanding .....	90
Communicating.....	93
Taking Action .....	98
Summary and Conclusions .....	103
 CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	 104
Introduction.....	104
Interpretation of Findings .....	105
Recommendations for Military Institutions .....	107
Recommendations for Further Study .....	109
Summary and Conclusions .....	110
 APPENDIX A QUESTIONS FOR ORAL GROUP INTERVIEW .....	 113
APPENDIX B RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS.....	114
REFERENCE LIST .....	118
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	127

## ACRONYMS

CQ	cultural intelligence
FM	Field Manual
GLOBE	Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PD	Power Distance
ROE	Rules of Engagement
SFOR	Stabilization Force Headquarters
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

Modern armies today appear to be trending technology over the human factor. Unfortunately, as through time new sophisticated weapon systems were developed and technology advanced, a unit's cohesion and its important role were somehow neglected. Revolutions in military affairs sometimes give the impression that the human factor is not as important.

We can never underestimate the importance of the human dimension. In the 1980s many military analysts agreed that the role of cohesion in the units will decrease. According to them technology would take the main role, although we cannot identify a single battlefield tactical situation that is independent of the human factor. One must indeed acknowledge the importance of technology, but cannot put aside the importance of cohesion. Henderson believes that in the future wars, besides technology, cohesion will be one of the most important factors.

In the future, the effect of high technology on military cohesion and combat effectiveness must be considered. The lethality and multiplier effects of new and modernized weapons systems will continue to modify the nature of war, as they have through history. From the time of the French Revolution and the beginning of the era of modern warfare, when French armies dominated the battlefield, cohesion and its relation to nationalism became a major factor in warfare. (Henderson 1985, xvi)

Modern trends in today's military operations have forced military planners to emphasize psychological and human factors while preparing units for operations. Vertical and horizontal cohesion in small tactical units and the ability to operate autonomously have become very important component of combat effectiveness, despite rapid technology

progress. In today's combat and peacekeeping operations we can identify different ways of conducting military operations than in the past. We have left behind the era of linear fighting when officers controlled the soldiers with a sword in their hand. Small and agile tactical units are taking an increasingly important role in today's multinational military operations. These small tactical units require confident and competent leaders to be successful. A good example is the Arab-Israel War in 1973, where the Israelis employed small tactical units extensively on the battlefield. These small tactical units achieved success on the basis of initiative, excellent leadership and strong cohesion.

There has been a significant increase in conducting multinational combat and peace support operations since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent end of the Cold War (Homan 2008, 103). Multinational operations are integrated operations by the heterogeneous armed forces of at least two different nations. The presence of many different nations helps increase the legitimacy of military operations and the solidarity between the nations involved in multinational operations in load, costs and risk sharing. The solidarity and cohesion in operations at the highest strategic level influences effectiveness at the battalion level or below.

Multinational military units have existed throughout military history. In the rapid changing international environment there exist many threats which have caused the transformation from traditional to modern military forces. In today's environment modern military forces must possess the ability to operate effectively in a multinational setting. Many small countries in the future will continue to contribute small tactical units such as a platoon or a company due to the amount of costs and limited human resources. Current and future military operations will be conducted with multinational battalions

that are comprised of ethnically heterogeneous platoons and companies. Current and future mission types and the combined composition of units will influence unit cohesion. This represents significant challenges to the development and sustainment of cohesion.

Small tactical unit cohesion is a key element in the effective execution of assigned military missions. The Slovenian Army and many other military units had substantial time to develop unit cohesion thanks to the battlefield circumstances in the past. These circumstances allowed more training and social time, and more stable soldier and leader manning. Multinational current operations demand a rapid establishment of cohesion in units. In order to facilitate cohesion militaries must realize that a leader's role is most significant in building cohesion in small military units.

The need for small units operating autonomously demands indirect command and control in execution of operational missions, also called mission command. Most often the leader does not have direct contact in the command and control line in today's operations. This implies a specific approach in leader and unit training to achieve a higher degree of stability, integrity and cohesion in the military unit.

Units lacking a foundation of trust among leaders and soldiers will not be effective. Ad hoc and inexperienced military units have reduced battlefield survivability because they do not operate as a cohesive unit. Realistic training replicating experiences during critical moments on the battlefield will increase mutual understanding and communication flow. That subsequently plays the most important role in a unit's cohesion. In this process the smallest tactical units have the largest role on the battlefield. Every soldier must protect and show care for his comrades throughout the battle. In that way we can achieve unity and cohesion in units (Marshall 1947, 123-137).

In 2006, I was the leader of an Operational Mentoring Liaison Team in Afghanistan. We worked in a combined setting with an American Embedded Training Team. Our mission was to train and mentor an Afghanistan National Army unit. The Slovenian team and the American team operated at the battalion level. We came into the theater at different times. Two different nationalities, languages, styles of leadership, competencies and skills, military systems and different approaches in mentoring Afghanistan Army leaders and soldiers resulted in significant problems in the first months of deployment. Our combined multinational team had a very low level of cohesiveness and that resulted in poor performance. After some time, when we proved to each other that we were both competent and tactically proficient, we began to trust each other. We developed a joint approach to training and achieved unity of effect. That resulted in higher cohesion amongst our team. We observed that we had to overcome many different hurdles before we could build cohesion that resulted in higher effectiveness in executing missions.

This research addresses the importance of unit cohesion and how it can be fostered in multinational units. This thesis describes numerous factors which significantly influence unit cohesion and performance, present great challenges for leaders, and contribute to complexity in a multinational setting. Using synthesis of findings from document study and the oral group interview data this thesis develops a framework whose key factors include (a) the conditions that exist in cohesive units and (b) the qualities and the tools that might help leaders facilitate a small multinational unit's cohesion. This paper will also discuss the sometimes hidden dynamics which are occurring between the individual and the group and importantly contribute to the

understanding of the phenomenon of a multinational unit's cohesiveness. Unit cohesion evolves from mutual loyalty, trust, and compatibility of norms, values, and goals of all unit members. Leadership in multinational units is different than leadership in homogeneous units in many areas. Leaders of multinational units may cultivate unit cohesion if they exhibit interpersonal and emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence and adaptable leadership style.

The main part of this paper will therefore describe leaders and leadership, because they have the most important role in facilitating cohesion in tactical military units (Iglič 2006, 145; Shills and Janowitz 1948, 297-299; McSally 2007, 1039). The leader will have to confront the modern reality. New missions will demand of him not just military skills, but also new skills and competencies to be effective in an ever-changing multinational environment. The environment today contains many social and technological changes. Subsequently, training and educating leaders will be very important. Leaders drive development, training and employment of military organizations.

Indeed, a question arises if the challenges of leadership in multinational units are different than those in units comprised of one nation. If there are differences, how can a leader successfully facilitate cohesion and effectively lead a multinational unit? And what are the most important factors a leader must take into consideration?

#### Primary Research Question

Given a multinational battalion or lower, how might a leader facilitate cohesion in multinational units?

### Secondary Research Questions

To address the primary research question, the following secondary questions must be answered.

1. What is cohesion?
2. What particular factors must a leader consider while facilitating cohesion in a multinational unit?
3. How does national heterogeneity influence cohesion and performance in multinational units?
4. What are the qualities a leader must possess to facilitate cohesion in a multinational unit?
5. What are the tools a leader can use to foster cohesion in a multinational unit?

### Assumptions

The first assumption is that the importance of the human dimension, which includes unit cohesiveness, predominates over technological factors. The second assumption is that a higher level of cohesion results in a more effective unit. The third assumption is that the leader's role is the most important in building the unit's cohesion. The fourth assumption is that despite differences between civilian and military organizations, some civilian experience may be useful in the military context.

### Definitions of Key Terms

The following terms will be used throughout the study.

Cohesion has been described and defined in many different ways. In the context of this paper cohesion represents the “total field of forces” acting on all members to remain in a group (Festinger, Schachter, and Back 1950, 164).

Competency is largely synonymous with skill. The competencies that leaders develop enable them to perform appropriate actions. Competencies are classified into four categories: interpersonal, conceptual, technical, and tactical.

Culture is a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts on the basis of which people interpret and behave, individually and in groups. Simply put, culture refers to a group or community with which one share common experiences that shape the way one understands the world (U.S. Army, Command and General Staff College 2009, 328-332).

Leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 1-2).

Multinational unit is a unit composed of military elements of two or more nations who formed an alliance or coalition for some specific purpose (Department of Defence 2007, GL-8).

Organizational climate describes the environment of units and organizations, primarily shaped by leaders. Climate is the feeling that is conveyed in a group about the organization, leaders, members and outsiders. It comes from shared perceptions and attitudes. Climate is generally a short-term experience (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 8-1).

### Limitations

Available research time limited the amount of reviewed literature. This study will only consider the information that is available through unclassified sources. Many of the sources in Slovenian and other Slavic languages are not available due to the distance from home country.

### Delimitations

The number one limitation is the size of the units in the research. Slovenia and many other smaller countries have small Armed Forces. The result is that these countries can contribute only small size tactical units, notably platoons and companies, to multinational operations. My research will focus on the battalion size or lower units.

The second limitation is the number of leadership styles researched. In this paper the researcher will focus on most appropriate or efficient leadership styles, not considering toxic and laissez-faire leadership style or such.

### Significance

The goal of this thesis is to research the role of leadership in units that are comprised of elements from different countries. The focus of the research is to discover how a leader can facilitate cohesion in multinational units. There are many different factors that influence cohesion in units. This thesis will put forward the specifications of multinational units and describe the social processes that are taking place inside those units.

The main purpose of the research is to complement the findings in the sphere of military social science that are not discovered until now. I will take into account



organizational, situational, cultural, ideological and social factors that influence the process of building a modern multinational unit's cohesion.

The leader has many attributes which influence his leadership style. There are some characteristics that are more important than others. The leader, who trusts and respects his soldiers and leads his unit in accordance with moral and ethical military norms, will likely foster creativity, cooperation, and motivation in his unit.

There are some specifics in multinational units that the leader must take into consideration while trying to gain trust and facilitate cohesion in the unit. The leader who manages to properly motivate soldiers and gain their trust will facilitate unit's cohesion. This cohesion will contribute to higher morale and effectiveness of the multinational unit.

The thesis will describe various factors which influence leadership and cohesion in multinational units. The findings, if properly applied, will lead to better leadership and cohesion in multinational units. Cohesive units led by competent leaders will become more successful and effective.

### Summary and Conclusions

This chapter described multinational operations and established the necessity for small tactical unit cohesion and effective leadership. Chapter 1 also presented the research questions, definitions of terms, limitations and delimitations, and the significance of the study. The next chapter will examine existing literature and identify unresolved gaps in it.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say 'I'. And that's not because they have trained themselves not to say 'I'. They don't think 'I'. They think 'we'; they think 'team'. They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don't sidestep it, but 'we' gets the credit. . . . This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.

—Peter F. Drucker

#### Introduction

Chapter 1 presented the research questions, definitions of terms, limitations and delimitations, and the significance of the study. The literature review will examine existing literature from various primary and secondary sources that are relevant to the research. To properly understand the complexity of the study it is important to be familiar with different aspects of cohesion and leadership. The literature touching on my primary question can be divided into two different subgroups; (1) civilian publications on cohesion and leadership, and (2) military publications on cohesion and leadership. Obviously, culture matters in the multinational environment, therefore both aspects of the literature review address culture.

#### Civilian Literature

Many authors have studied and worked on the long and rich history of the phenomenon of cohesiveness. Thus an abundance of literature on this subject exists and focuses on the fundamental characteristics of cohesiveness.

Cohesiveness is an attribute which enables individuals to form a group, prevents people from leaving the group, and motivates a group to actively cooperate.

The inconsistent use of the term cohesion has caused much confusion in the past when it comes to understanding the various effects cohesion has on groups and their readiness to take action. To properly understand cohesiveness an important distinction must be made between social cohesion and task cohesion.

Social cohesion refers to the nature and quality of emotional bonds, friendship and caring for group members. A group displays social cohesion when the members of the group are also friends and are also emotionally attached to each other. Social cohesiveness is about instilling confidence in group members with the help of interpersonal dynamics. Interpersonal dynamics are about friendship, lasting acquaintances with others, social bonding and mutual assistance in private lives (Iglič 2006, 152).

Professional cohesion or task cohesion, on the other hand, refers to the commitment of group members to achieve common goals by exerting a group effort. A highly cohesive group is comprised of members who are driven to achieve a common goal; they are motivated and coordinate their work to achieve a common goal (MacCoun 1993, 288-290).

Studies have shown that the relative level of mutual trust in team member abilities, the individual level of professional ethics, and real competence of members to perform the required tasks significantly influence task cohesion. A belief that people will act in line with expectations is not based on the fact that they are friends but instead is based on the fact that they are coworkers who are capable to act in accordance with the agreed upon set of professional standards (Iglič 2006, 142).

MacCoun links high task cohesion to effective teamwork. He defines teamwork in the following manner: “a group with high task cohesion is composed of members who share a common goal and who are motivated to coordinate their efforts as a team to achieve that goal” (MacCoun et al. 2006, 2).

Michalisin and his team defined team cohesion as the degree to which members are attracted to their team and desire to remain in it. Michalisin’s research team gathered a number of studies which show a positive relationship between transformational leadership in general and cohesion. Unfortunately, none of these studies could identify specific elements of transformational leadership that affect cohesion (Michalisin et al. 2007, 5-15).

The quality of leadership and type of leadership style are key factors in determining level of group cohesiveness (Bass 1981; Henderson 1985; Hollander 1985). Researchers have defined two dimensions of leadership: task-oriented (task) leadership, which focuses on goal achievement and relations-oriented (social) leadership, which focuses on creating a warm and caring climate for team members. Effective leaders can use either dimension of leadership, because both facilitate group cohesion. Researchers have not systematically tested the hypothesis that social leadership promotes social cohesion and that task leadership promotes task cohesion. This omission is likely because most studies have not differentiated between the forms of cohesion (MacCoun 1993, 302-303).

Ovsenik claims that leaders today play a different, more integrated role in their leadership tasks. According to him, they provide “richer” and more holistic leadership. A modern leader therefore tends to be both, task and socially oriented. Subordinates have to

perceive a leader as a competent person when it comes to achieving organizational goals while also establishing qualitative relationships between leaders and subordinates (2005, 286-293).

Leadership style can be defined as a set of individual methods, techniques and tactics used by a leader. Leadership style is therefore a visible way of leadership which distinguishes leaders when there is a need to communicate with a large number of people on different levels, in different environments and in different situations (Vršec 1993, 15). Leadership style is also a personal approach used to lead people such as ensuring significance, providing direction and motivation. Leadership style refers to the manner in which a leader acts to carry out his role or the way he executes tasks. Leadership style is primarily seen from the perspective of relationships a leader has toward his subordinates. It is a method which leaders use when directly interacting with their subordinates. The choice of leadership style depends on several factors. According to Lubi, the four most important factors are as follows:

1. Leadership philosophy. This refers to the way a leader perceives work and leadership as well as the way a leader perceives people and his opinion of them. Leadership philosophy should indicate whether a leader in his mind is willing to cooperate with subordinates or is guided by a belief that subordinates are there solely to follow rules and are to be punished if they do not follow them.

2. Situation. This refers to how a leader should adjust his leadership style to the circumstances in the internal and external environment of the group. This is the essence of situational theory.

3. The nature of tasks. This refers how the nature of the tasks should influence on the leadership style. For example, the autocratic style would be the most appropriate and effective style when a group is performing repetitive tasks.

4. Characteristics of followers. A leader should consider the expectations, beliefs, values, knowledge and working habits of followers to aid in determining an appropriate leadership style (Lubi 2004, 63-70).

These four factors contributed to the emergence of several leadership theories. This thesis describes only the most typical leadership theories, such as behavioral and situational.

Behavioral theory describes two leadership styles: (1) people oriented or (2) task oriented. Behavior of a leader is described by two unrelated statements: (1) job-centered leadership or task oriented and (2) employee centered leadership or people oriented (Lubi 2004, 75-76).

Situational theory highlights that the use of a particular style depends on the organization and the activity taking place in that organization, as well as on the situations and circumstances in which leadership takes place. Reddin representing situational theory identifies the following leadership styles: engaged-socially oriented, uniting, retained, and ambitious. Miller offers a theory which supplements situational theory and includes subordinates and the way they influence decision making. Miller also defines autocratic, democratic and liberal leadership style (Northouse 2004, 65-86; Lubi 2004, 71-80; Bratušek 2000, 67-79).

To summarize, it can be said that the majority of authors distinguish between two leadership styles: authoritarian or authoritative leadership style and participative style, corresponding with a democratic leadership style.

According to Perrenoud, the key element of successful leadership is competencies or the ability of individuals to activate, use and connect knowledge in complex, heterogeneous and unpredictable situations (Svetlik 2005, 13).

According to Northouse, a leader's ability can be categorized in the following three areas: (1) problem solving skills, which refer to the leader's proficiency and creative means to solve new and unusual organizational problems; (2) social prudence skills, which help a leader to understand people and social systems; (3) knowledge, which refers to accumulation of information and mental structures sorting this information (Northouse 2004, 40-43).

In discussing the multinational environment today it is common that leaders work with others from diverse nationalities and cultures. Culture refers to a group of people who share common experiences that shape the way they understand the world. Two scholars defined the four most important cultural dimensions: directness, hierarchy, consensus, and individualism (Bibikova and Kotelnikov 2001).

DuPraw and Axner arranged cultural differences into six fundamental models: communication styles, attitudes towards conflict, approaches to completing tasks, decision-making styles, attitudes towards disclosure, and approaches to learning (Bibikova and Kotelnikov 2001).

Klein and Pongonis organized cultural differences in three groups: behavioral, cognitive, and values.

Behavioral differences are easy to recognize, because they include differences like language, non-verbal communication, social rules, and customs. Eye contact, for example is a very desirable gesture in some cultures, on the other hand it can be considered as an insult in others. The way women are treated could be considered normal in one culture and insulting or disrespectful in another. Disregarding social rules and customs can cause tensions. However, understanding behavior alone is not sufficient to create effective multinational units.

Cognitive differences, on the other hand, cannot be directly observed, because they include diverse reasoning styles and ways of thinking. These differences hinder establishment of shared situational awareness, common expectations, and coordinated action.

Cultural values are passed by people from one generation to another. They are also different between nations. Values can come from different religions, philosophies, organizations, and social patterns. Differences in values and ethical codes may also represent barriers in the multinational environment (Klein Altman, Pongonis, and Klein 2000, 6-8).

In the late 1960s, a psychologist named Dr. Geert Hofstede started research on cultural differences. He collected cultural data on people working for IBM in over 40 countries. His findings represent a comprehensive product that captures national values and cultural differences. He described the patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting as “mental programming.” The three distinguished levels in mental programming are human nature, culture, and personality. Human nature is common to all humans and is inherited.



Culture refers to a specific group and is learned. Personality refers to individuals; it is based on traits, and is partly inherited and learned (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005, 3-5).

Hofstede stresses that the values and beliefs of people from different cultures influence the behaviors of people, activities of groups, and operating of organizations. Cultural beliefs also affect whether a differing culture is viewed as legitimate and acceptable. His work initially identified four cultural dimensions that is an internationally recognized standard. Later on he added a fifth dimension based on a study of Asian cultures.

These five dimensions are presented below:

1. Power Distance (PD) versus Power Equalization. This refers to the degree of inequality that is accepted and exists among people that the populace of a country considers normal. A high PD score indicates that society accepts an unequal distribution of power. Power Equalization means that power is shared among people and that people view themselves as equals. High PD means authoritative leaders and centralized decision-making. Low PD means “flatter” organizations and more teamwork.

2. Individualism versus Collectivism. It refers to the strength of the ties among people within the society. Individualism-collectivism describes whether an individual identifies himself by personal achievements and decisions or by the collective group to which he is attached. A high Individualism score shows a weak connection with people. In nations with a high Individualism score there is lack of interpersonal connection, little sharing of responsibility, expectation of awards for hard work, respect for privacy, and a few close friends. A society with high Collectivism has strong group cohesion, a large

amount of loyalty, harmony is more important than honesty, and respect for other members and traditions.

3. Masculinity versus Femininity. It refers to how much a society values traditional male (assertiveness, performance, success, competition) and female roles (quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity). High Masculinity scores are found in countries where men are expected to be tough, assertive and strong. Working women usually have separate professions from men and the distinction is well defined. Men do not discuss emotions or make emotionally based decisions. High Femininity scores do not reverse the gender roles, the roles are more indistinct. Women and men are working together equally across many professions and are more apt treated equally in high femininity setting.

4. Uncertainty Avoidance. It relates to the level of anxiety people feel when in uncertain or unknown situations. In other words, it is the level to which people prefer structured over unstructured situations. Nations with a high Uncertainty Avoidance score try to avoid ambiguous situations. They prefer clear rules and order. They like concise and detailed plans, focused on tactical aspects. Nations with a low Uncertainty Avoidance score enjoy new things and value differences, have an informal attitude, and accept more risk. There are few rules, people try to live by their own conviction and do not like to be told how they should behave. People are more concerned with long term strategy, more curious, and show a minimal emotional response.

5. Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation. It relates to how much people value long term traditions and values instead of short term ones. This orientation is based on the values stressed in Confucian philosophy teachings. For people with a high

Long Term Orientation score social obligations, traditions, strong work ethic, commitment, loyalty, perseverance, thrift, and honor are very important. Nations with Short Term Orientation promote equality, individualism, and creativity. People expect to live by the same standards and rules they create, are respectful to others and do not prefer routine (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005).

Despite some scholars' criticism, Hofstede's model remains one of the most influential models on culture. Scholars involved in the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program have substituted Gender Egalitarianism and Assertiveness for Hofstede's Masculinity dimension and added three dimensions: Humanistic, Performance, and Future Orientation. GLOBE researchers found that cultural differences strongly influence ways in which people think about leaders and norms and privileges granted to leaders (House et al. 2004).

### Military Literature

In the military context some scholars define cohesiveness as a result from mutual commitment between soldiers and leaders, while others share opinion that cohesion is the commitment of soldiers to their unit with the primary goal of the unit successful realization of a common goal.

Johns (1984) says that military units' cohesiveness can be defined as a commitment, bonding of members of a military unit, where the members are committed to each other and to their unit and their tasks. According to Henderson (1985, 9) what defines a military unit is identification of its members with its unit and with their commanders.

In a high cohesive unit individual members are very involved in a network of interpersonal relationships which help them to trust their comrades during times of hardship. Manning defines three qualities of a group that are present in a cohesive military unit: shared social environment of group members, shared experiences and perceptions in military service, and a clear and important group task (Boer 2001, 37).

Cohesive units have trust, mutual respect and understanding between the members of the unit (between soldiers themselves and also between soldiers and their commanders). Emotional bonds help units to persevere in their endeavors, despite physical challenges, dangers and fears. Members of cohesive units can rely on their mutual abilities. They trust their companions to take care of them and trust that their commanders will not abandon them. Commanders can create this kind of atmosphere in a military unit if they are well qualified, attentive and approachable which shows that they trust their subordinates and that they are trustworthy as well (Boer 2001).

Stewart addresses the following four components of cohesion which helps demonstrate that cohesion truly is a complex phenomenon.

Horizontal cohesion refers to trust among group members. Horizontal cohesion defines bonding with members of the same group, or horizontal bonding among commanders of different units.

Vertical cohesion refers to the connection between commanders and their subordinates. Vertical cohesion is enhanced when subordinates see their commanders as competent and caring.

Organizational cohesion refers to the relationship between an individual soldier and a military organization. Organizational cohesion connects small groups with a “higher purpose.”

Societal cohesion is the relationship between a military organization and the society it serves. Societal cohesion includes broader factors of cultural, economic and political heritage of a nation (Stewart 1991).

In recent years other scholars developed a similar model that also distinguishes between four components of unit cohesion. The primary level of this model refers to peer and leader bonding, while the secondary level refers to organizational and institutional bonding (Salo 2006, 1). Authors using this model, which places cohesion in a broader perspective, define cohesion of a military unit as a continuous social integration process of members of a certain unit with individuals in their primary group (e.g. a squad, a platoon), with commanders in their unit and with larger secondary groups inside the organization. These secondary groups are comprised of larger military units (e.g. a company, a battalion) and a military institution, in which everyone is a part (e.g. the Army). Cohesion, with its horizontal, vertical, organizational and institutional components, is a product of different social relationships established through interaction and the experiences members of a military unit gain in their daily military activities (Salo and Siebold 2005, 1).

Cohesion has an effect on the quality of work of a military unit. It enhances the efficiency of performing the tasks prescribed, it increases unit members’ motivation and discipline; furthermore, it accelerates the development of subordinates’ and commanders’ teamwork (Siebold 2006, 195-199). It is important to view cohesion as a quality existing

in a group and changing over time and not as a characteristic that is either present in a group or not (Siebold 2006, 194).

Siebold suggests that some amount of cohesion is always present in military units (2006, 199). However, there is no final answer as to how long it would take to develop cohesion sufficiently enough for a military unit to have the capability to work cooperatively and endure in stressful situations. Forming a functional unit is a condition necessary for an effective unit, ready for combat. Functional units must have sufficient weapons of good quality and competent personnel. After these conditions are met, the success of this military unit strongly depends on the relationships of its members (Boer 2001, 36).

The U.S. Army appears to consider cohesion important. Cohesion is addressed in a number of doctrinal publications. However, Field Manual (FM) 100-8, The Army in Multinational Operations, mentions cohesion only three times. It recognizes that multinational operations are difficult and the senior commanders should develop understanding of the characteristics of troop contributing nations. It also recognizes that different national agendas and competitiveness among nations can hinder multinational cohesion. There are some recommendations for aiding senior commanders in establishing rapport within the partnership, but it does not address cohesion at the lower tactical level (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1997, 1-4 - 1-6).

FM 6-0, Mission Command, recognizes that the quality of cohesion is a critical factor to mission accomplishment (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2003, 2-54).

Cohesion gets more attention in FM 6-22, Army Leadership. FM 6-22 addresses the importance of cohesion at the direct and organizational level and mentions it many

times. Leaders, in their effort to develop subordinates, must create a positive environment that promotes cohesion. Leaders can build cohesive units by promoting trust, Army Values, maintaining high standards, and above all creating a positive climate (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 8-1 - 8-6). Similarly, organizational leaders build cohesive units through application of competencies, promoting a healthy ethical climate, and widely known purpose (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 11-1 - 11-5).

In an Army War College paper, Wong defined the cohesion of a unit in the form of an equation:  $\text{Stability} + \text{Stress} + \text{Success} = \text{Cohesion}$  (Wong 1985, 34).

Stability is the most important requirement for cohesion. The longer a person is a member of a group, the more he trusts other members and increases cohesion. People, who know they are together for only a short period of time, do not cooperate as well (Wong 1985).

Stress can have a positive effect on the cohesion process. Training events should be problem solving oriented and should encourage units to overcome hardship together. Teamwork can only begin after peers get to know the weaknesses and strengths of each other. A higher frequency of social interactions helps unit members to make each other's acquaintance and build a cohesive unit. When stress appears in a form of an outside threat it forces a unit to become united and to collectively aim all efforts towards the external threat. The fact that soldiers are able to overcome challenges that seem too daunting initially fills soldiers with confidence and great pride.

Successfully performed tasks raise the status of the unit. Cohesion develops faster in groups or units which are successful in their tasks. Members of the unit are more loyal

to a high status group (Wong 1985). Cohesion and success go hand in hand. They form a cyclic process, meaning that successfully performed tasks also enhance unit cohesion.

Conversely, Hughes indicates that a high cohesive unit will not necessarily be the most effective one. A high cohesive, but badly trained unit is after all still only a badly trained unit and will therefore be less efficient than a non-cohesive, well-trained unit (Hughes 2001, 252).

Reilly opines that cohesion can result in unintended consequences. An example is when unit cohesion is based on values which are not in accordance with the values of the organization the unit belongs. This can result in deliberate obstruction of work or in the worst case; it can lead to disintegration of a unit. A competent military leader should encourage a positive attitude in a unit that is in accordance with the values, principles and norms of a military organization (Reilly 2001, 60).

Shay argues that the relationship of trust between a commander and his soldiers is a prerequisite to establish cohesion. Aristotle long ago discussed three means a leader employs to gain his soldiers' trust. This is achieved by appealing to: soldiers' character (ethos), reason (logos), and emotions (pathos). Aristotle also listed that a unit expects the following from their leader: professional competence and personal integrity (arête); intelligent good sense and practical wisdom (phronesis); and finally good will and respect for the troops (eunoia) (Shay 2000, 13).

How successfully individuals are integrated in a group also depends on a leadership style and organizational climate. McSally says that when commanding a military unit, the leader has to create a climate where individuals are respected for being a



part of a group and where they all have equal opportunities, obligations and responsibilities (2007, 1037).

Waddell introduced an interesting situational leadership model for military leaders. He argues that situation influences three leadership components (leader, subordinates, and mission). This model distinguishes diverse situations according to the leadership level, wartime versus peacetime, composition of units, and staff leadership versus operational units. First, higher level leaders as opposed to lower level leaders, demonstrate more universal competencies. They would be more effective communicating an overarching vision and avoiding micromanagement. Secondly, leaders in wartime as opposed to peacetime should use the authoritative leadership style to mitigate soldiers' fear. Thirdly, in referring to composition of units leaders have an easier job in homogeneous units as opposed to heterogeneous units. Lastly, leaders of operational units should use the "heroic" leadership style, while staff leaders may be successful using the cooperative (participative) leadership style (Waddell 1994).

The majority of leadership theories from the previous century are based on the comparison between leaders and subordinates, determining who has the most important role in achieving goals. Researchers, who support authoritative leadership style, claim that leaders have a crucial role in creating a successful organization (e.g. Napoleon, Alexander the Great...). Others, who support the democratic leadership style, share the opinion that subordinates with their competencies and efficiency contribute the most to reaching organizational goals (Waddell 1994).

Many researchers are of the opinion that a good leader is capable of using multiple leadership styles, depending on the situation and on the nature of subordinates.

One Slovenian scholar claims that military leadership style cannot be confined to only one style because contemporary working conditions in military organizations make it impossible to be most effective (Bratušek 2000, 33). The leaders select their leadership style depending on how much time is available, on the level of relationship and respect among group members, on how well subordinates are qualified and what access they have to information, stress level, and the type of tasks (structured, unstructured, complicated or simple), among other factors.

The current FM 6-22 Army Leadership scarcely mentions leadership style; instead it focuses on competency-based leadership. The previous FM 22-100 Army Leadership which was replaced in 2006 by a slightly altered FM 6-22 describes five leadership styles. The styles are as follows.

#### Directing Leadership Style

Directing leadership is leader-centered. This style is characterized by leaders giving detailed instructions to their subordinates while carefully supervising subordinates' work. This style of leadership is relevant when commanders do not have enough time to explain the situation in detail. If a commander is taken as a trustworthy person, there will be no problem for the subordinates to understand why the commander has decided to use this style of leadership. This style is also suitable in the case of an inexperienced unit.

#### Participating Leadership Style

Participating style points out the importance of a leader and soldiers. When a leader receives an assignment he consults with his subordinates about it; however, the

leader retains the final decision making authority. This style can be used in situations where there is enough time for consultations or when subordinates are experienced. By employing this type of cooperative leadership style a leader contributes significantly to the formation of a cohesive unit, because the soldiers have a sense of contributing when developing a working plan.

### Delegating Leadership Style

Delegating style allows subordinates to solve problems by themselves and to make decisions. This style is useful only in cases where subordinates are well qualified. Leaders use this style when they want to create an educational experience. However, the leader is still responsible for all the tasks a unit executes and also for those that are not carried out.

### Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles

FM 22-100 describes transformational and transactional leadership as two opposite styles. The former leadership style is centered on inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and leading change efforts. Transformational (charismatic) leadership style evokes changes in soldiers by challenging them to strive for more than just fulfilling their momentary needs and interests. This style presupposes soldiers' commitment to personal growth and organizational improvement.

Transactional leaders, on the other hand, motivate their subordinates either by rewarding them or by threatening to punish them if they fail an assignment. This type of leader provides precise instructions of what is to be done, and then publicly expose only those who have done something wrong. Leaders who only use this leadership style never

succeed in gaining the long-term trust of their subordinates because soldiers a tendency to see such leaders as self-serving. This style also decreases innovativeness and a desire for risk taking, but it does increase overall unit safety (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1999, 3-15 - 3-17).

It is clear that military leaders and soldiers taking part in modern operations are often forced to work with other nationalities and cultures. This is the reason new competencies emerged. Literature speaks of cultural awareness, cultural and intercultural competence, cultural literacy, and transcultural skills. McFarland made a distinction between cultural literacy and cultural competency where the latter was viewed as a critical leadership competency (McFarland 2005, 4).

In discussing the multinational environment Yee introduces a new term, cultural intelligence (CQ). CQ refers to the urgency of developing cultural knowledge which is critical for military leaders today to lead multinational units and to cooperate in military operations (Yee et al. 2005, 2).

The U.S. Army increasingly acknowledges the importance of national culture. Culture receives surprisingly little attention in FM 100-8, The Army in Multinational Operations. FM 100-8 offers that multinational commanders should know and respect their partners, including their culture, religion, and language to solidify the partnership and avoid friction. Therefore, nations with similar culture may find it easier to cooperate (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1997, 1-2 - 1-8).

Culture gets more attention in FM 6-22, Army Leadership. Because America is culturally diverse, leaders must deal with people from various cultural backgrounds and prevent conflicts arising from cultural differences (Headquarters, Department of the

Army 2006, 4-5). Secondly, chapter 6 defines cultural knowledge as an important component of a leader's intelligence. Leaders should have cultural awareness to be influential. Not just awareness, but cultural understanding is also crucial to the success of multinational operations. Leaders must be aware of cultural differences and try to overcome those (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 6-7 - 6-9). Lastly, chapter 8 speaks about culture within an institution and large units, and compares it to organizational climate (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, 8-1 - 8-2).

The new published FM 3-24.2, Tactics in Counterinsurgency, devotes substantial attention to culture and already addresses cultural capability, which has two components: cross-cultural competency and regional competence. Cross-cultural competency includes cultural knowledge, skills, and attributes, and it represents the basis for understanding any culture. Regional competence, on the other hand, includes culture-specific knowledge, skills, and attributes that are related to a specific region (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2009, 1-24 - 1-25).

### Summary and Conclusions

This review of available literature describes existing primary and secondary sources that are relevant to the research questions. The literature is divided into two different subgroups. The first part of the literature review addresses the complex phenomenon of cohesion and leadership from the civilian context. The second part of this chapter describes cohesion and leadership in the military context. Both parts of the literature review pay some attention to the predominantly national culture.

Many civilian and military authors have studied the phenomenon of cohesion and leadership; the above-mentioned researchers provide an extensive number of different

points of view on the research topic. Cohesion and leadership have been defined quite differently by different researchers. This lack of consensus creates challenges for further research.

The literature on culture in multinational business organizations is extensive. At least two civilian frameworks addressed above have been developed that identify dimensions on which cultures differ, such as Hofstede and the GLOBE project. These researchers have focused on analyzing how cultures differ. They do not determine the commonalities of cultures.

In the military context, there were quite a few researchers who discussed how a leader could facilitate unit cohesion. Unit cohesion is mentioned many times in the Army doctrine; however there is scant mention of cohesion in multinational units on the tactical level. U.S. Army doctrine currently acknowledges the importance of culture and cultural differences.

A number of prior studies have documented relationships between leadership and cohesion, but the results varied widely. In addition to determining how unit cohesion is acquired in general, more research is needed to address how and to what extent unit cohesion can be fostered in multinational units. Researchers have not addressed yet how a leader can contribute to unit cohesiveness in the multinational units to achieve better performance. In particular, research must address the basis for leader's qualities, behavior, and tools that are required to facilitate cohesion in the multinational units.

The next chapter discusses the methodology used for the research while trying to discover how a leader can facilitate unit cohesiveness so multinational units can more effectively participate in modern military operations.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The second chapter of this paper provided a broad overview of the literature and materials used during the research part of this thesis and identified existing gaps. This chapter describes the research methodology applied to aid in discovering how a leader might more effectively facilitate multinational unit cohesiveness.

This thesis uses mainly a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining data about behaviors, values, and social contexts, and in identifying intangible factors. The qualitative method is more flexible than the quantitative method. One advantage of the qualitative method in exploratory research is using open-ended questions and allowing participants to answer in their own words rather than simply “yes” or “no.” The second advantage of the qualitative method is that it allows the researcher to immediately follow up on participants’ answers for clarification, if required (Mack et al. 2005, 1-4).

This chapter describes the methodology used throughout the research to gather and analyze the research material and synthesize the conclusions. This chapter contains five parts. The first part identifies how the data for the research has been obtained. The second part determines the feasibility of methods used. The third part describes historical examples from the field. The last two parts identify the validity of the research, summarize the chapter, and introduce the fourth chapter.

### Obtaining Necessary Information

The analysis and research of this thesis was dictated by the primary and secondary questions and therefore focused on answering them. To review, the primary research question is: Given a multinational battalion or lower, how might a leader facilitate cohesion in multinational units? The secondary questions include: What is cohesion? What particular factors must a leader consider while facilitating cohesion in a multinational unit? How does national heterogeneity influence cohesion and performance in multinational units? What are the qualities a leader must possess to facilitate cohesion in a multinational unit? What are the tools a leader can use to foster cohesion in a multinational unit? To answer the primary and secondary research questions, this paper uses the miscellaneous methodology access. In the process of finding answers to the primary and secondary questions, numerous sources of information were obtained. Data collection and analysis assisted in identifying ways and tools leaders can use to improve cohesion in multinational units. To ensure a balance of sources and properly validate the gathered information the researcher examined data collected from both primary and secondary sources, complemented with the oral group interview. The research applied the methods described below.

The research started with a descriptive method over-viewing the literature collection identifying existing information. This method was also used to describe facts and shape particular research areas. The literature review found various historical examples from the field, which described the situation, problems, and factors military leaders might take into consideration to facilitate cohesion in military multinational units.



The next step of the research employed an oral group interview methodology approach to collect additional data. This group interview served as the additional source of data collection for the remainder of the study and helped determine if problems discovered in the literature review still exist. The interview data also identified new or previously unrecognized views on leadership and cohesion in multinational units that were not addressed in the literature review. The purpose of the group interview was to gather personal perspectives on levels of cohesiveness, as well as challenges, problems, and advantages while working together with other nations in multinational settings.

### Feasibility of Method

The author primarily used three methods to collect data: the document study, historical examples, and focus group interview. The nature of the data and the problem, just as in any research, dictated the methodology used. The topic of this thesis is obviously leadership and cohesion. Since the nature of this topic is mostly intangible and hard to measure, this is a qualitative study.

The study of various documents and historical examples from the field provided initial insights into a multinational environment and described the issues that affect leaders in that environment. The research utilized a broad range of print and electronic sources. The research ended when the factors and issues were described well enough to draw conclusions. The analysis was focused by the previously mentioned research questions. The information from the document study was also used to generate questions for the oral group interview. According to Mahoney, the advantages of document studies are: the documents are locally available and inexpensive, useful, and are an unobtrusive way of determining values, interests, and climate. The disadvantages are: documents may

be incomplete or inaccurate, require time consuming analysis, and possible difficulty in accessing or locating suitable documents (Mahoney 1997).

Focus group methodology combines elements of interviewing and participant observation, and can be used in: defining problems, identifying strengths and recommendations, obtaining perceptions of impacts, and generating new ideas (Mahoney 1997). For the oral group interview the researcher gathered eleven international officers attending the Command General Staff College. The author approached these officers deliberately for their diverse geographic origins, different national and organizational cultures, and their experience and competence to acquire and offer different points of view on the concerning issue. The officers were from Australia, Canada, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Morocco, Nepal, Ukraine, and USA. All participants have been deployed and have worked in multinational units at the tactical level. The oral group interview was recorded digitally. They were asked to reflect on the focus group questions and permitted to make comments to other officers' answers. Discussion and exchanging different points of view generated new ideas and perspectives. The advantages of this method are that it provides rich data, permits face-to-face contact with respondents, offers the opportunity to explore topics in depth, and is very flexible, while the main disadvantages are information distortion due to participants' fallible memories or perceptions and the large volume of information the method produces (Mahoney 1997).

The final step of the research used the method of synthesis to join the findings from theory and the field from all analyzed sources in order to develop a framework which will help leaders facilitate multinational unit cohesion in the future. To conduct the analysis and synthesis in a logical order the author started answering the secondary

research questions first, ending with the primary research question. Without quantifiable data it is difficult to argue in absolutes. That is not the intent of this study. Instead, the evidence merges conclusions and suggests recommendations for future use.

### Historical Examples from the Field

The selection criteria of the specific examples from the field were based on the author's wish to achieve a variety of locations, mission types, and circumstances. The author's purpose was to gather a wide range of examples in order to provide a good understanding of the various situations in the multinational environment. Though some examples are relatively dated, they appear to represent issues that are very relevant today.

As discussed before, military leadership in multinational units is specific in many ways, because a leader should take into consideration national cultural differences, diverse organizational cultures, various national leadership styles and many other factors. The follow on examples provide a description of the daily life issues from recent multinational operations. Examples help to determine the potentials and problems of briefly described multinational missions. Examples show differences and similarities between different national contingents. The organizational and cultural challenges described below can represent barriers to effective leadership, unit cohesion, and military effectiveness of deployed multinational forces.

### Observations from the Gulf War

According to Zanini and Taw, Operation Desert Storm demonstrated a technology gap between coalition partners. For example, French military forces lacked night vision equipment. The United Kingdom (UK) had problems with command and control systems

and electronic warfare capabilities. Additionally, many coalition partners were required to use United States (US) satellite communications equipment, secure radios, and phones down to battalion level to ensure connectivity (Bensahel 2003, 136).

Examples of cultural and other differences also came to light. Arab forces contingents were grouped together under a parallel command structure due to different culture, language, religious and logistic similarities. France was unable to commit full strength units because French law prohibited conscripts from serving outside France. As result, the units had less manpower than expected (Bowman 1997, 12).

Participation of women in military operations caused additional friction due to cultural differences. Luft notes that Saudis were embarrassed because women were protecting them. American soldiers lost respect in Saudis' eyes, because they took commands from women. American women driving vehicles also caused friction in Saudi Arabian society (Luft 2002, 285). While women in Western countries carry out most military tasks, women in Muslim countries are excluded from these tasks. According to Palin, such religious and cultural contrasts may inhibit cooperation and cohesion in multinational units (Palin 1995, 49).

#### Observations from Bosnia

The military presence established in Bosnia following the end of their civil war was called Stabilization Force (SFOR) and included participants from over 38 nations, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and non-NATO countries.

Karrasch researched SFOR Headquarters' performance which involved sixty-eight staff officers. The findings indicated experience level and competencies of equal ranking officers varied between countries. For example, a captain from the Germany

Army goes through selection before deployment and is usually much more experienced than the same rank officer from the US Army. Another example is, UK officers are more familiar with the NATO organizational culture, as compared to US officers. That implies UK officers came into SFOR already prepared to execute NATO operating procedures, while American officers required a few months to adapt and gain familiarity with the process (Karrasch 2003, 6-7).

Barriers to adaptability between officers from different nations were identified. For example, US forces were not trained to work with multinational partners and multinational staff members were not integrated into staff planning processes (Pierce 2009).

Findings overall demonstrated that collective effectiveness was stronger in homogeneous small teams than it was in the larger SFOR multinational organization. The research also revealed that a shared military culture cannot entirely substitute for a lack of shared culture and norms (Karrasch 2003, vii-7).

Winslow (1999) reported national differences in ethical values. Canadian troops in SFOR observed that some of the other nation's troops were involved in black market activities and also accepted bribes from locals. Certain personnel from these contingents felt that this was an acceptable way to obtain additional money, because this was considered normal in their own countries. Canadian personnel were offended by this behavior, began to question the other troops' professionalism and did not trust them (Winslow 1999).

## Observations from Kosovo

Researchers examined German-Italian cooperation in Camp Prizren and Camp Airfield. This multinational unit was staffed mainly by Italians and Germans with a smaller number of Austrian, Swiss, Spanish, and Turkish military personnel (Keller and Tomforde 2005, 146).

Germany was the largest troop contributor and almost the entire infrastructure in Camp Prizren was German. The Germans considered the Italians as relatively sociable and friendly, but also had some prejudices about them. The Germans' perceptions of Italian working priorities and obligations were that Italians work less, arrive late to meetings, are not reliable, follow detailed tactical orders, and have to be guided. In addition, cultural differences among Germans and Italians were noted, such as Germans walking fast in groups of two not saying much and Italians walking slowly in larger groups talking very loudly. The result was Germans and Italians lived in two culturally distinct worlds in the same camp (Keller and Tomforde 2005, 148-150).

The working language used in the German-Italian unit was English. Language skills on both sides were quite poor. Germans tried to make themselves understood, while Italians avoided English due to lack of confidence and to avoid embarrassment. There was substantial misunderstanding due to the use of technical terms and specialized vocabulary. Additionally, English language deficiencies caused barriers in the communication process during meetings. This caused difficulties in decision making (Keller and Tomforde 2005, 152-153).

Additional challenges were caused by different arrival times of German and Italian contingents. The Germans were deployed for four months, while Italians were

deployed for six. That caused personnel instability and different emotional stages of deployed personnel (Tomforde 2007, 163).

No common training for German-Italian unit was executed before deployment to facilitate trust and mission identity. Jelušič and Pograjc have shown for the Italian-Hungarian-Slovenian Brigade, which succeeded the German contingent in Kosovo that joint training before deployment contributed to good multinational understanding and higher integration (Tomforde 2007, 164).

In Camp Airfield, Italian and German personnel were exposed to much more austere living conditions than in Camp Prizren. In addition, the national rules and language differences hindered cooperation. Despite this, soldiers helped each other and developed good relationships. They organized informal gatherings with national food and drink, and organized common recreational facilities. Over time, the soldiers developed a transnational camp identity, which they were proud of. Germans and Italians attempted to learn the basics of their counterparts' language for daily use. All these factors helped in overcoming severe living conditions in the camp and resulted in mutual trust and understanding (Tomforde 2007, 165).

Differences in ethical values also caused friction. For example, Canadian officers reported frequent bribery attempts by locals seeking work. While the locals and some troops saw this as a normal form of behavior, the Canadians saw this as unethical act (Winslow 1999). Involvement in bribery is just one manifestation of differences in ethical values. Another example showed some troops in Kosovo were involved in sexual harassment and abuses towards the local population. The behavior of these troops was considered normal according to the ethical values in their home country (Gillespie 2002).

Alcohol consumption offers another example of the differences in acceptable behaviors among contingents while deployed. Alcohol consumption ranged from completely forbidden to unrestricted. Dunn and Flemming reported that Canada restricted daily alcohol consumption because of the belief that some incidents were caused by alcohol. Canadian personnel in Kosovo did not view the restrictions favorably, because other nations had either no or higher limits of alcohol consumption (Dunn and Fleming 2001). Additionally, drunkenness is viewed as harmless and acceptable in some militaries, while a serious religious or moral offense in others.

Different benefits and allowances also appeared to create negative perceptions in multinational units. For example, some contingents in Kosovo saw Canadian soldiers as “soft,” because they received three weeks of leave and additional pay for overseas deployment. These issues may contribute to opinions that some contingents cannot be trusted to do the job and are less professional than others (Winslow 1999).

### Observations from Afghanistan

National constraints on information sharing that can be perceived as unwillingness to share information caused operational problems in Afghanistan. Bensahel reported operational security was extremely important for US troops, so information was not released to coalition partners. Coalition partners often did not know the reasons why they were undertaking certain missions. Coalition leaders had difficulties in deciding whether to undertake these missions because they could not calculate the involved risks and benefits. In addition, countries which were sharing information with the US received little information in return (Bensahel 2003, 118).



Multiple differences among nations in the German-Dutch Multinational Brigade at Camp Warehouse in Kabul caused tensions at the tactical level. In 2003 the Dutch accused the Germans of administrative and operational bias. Soeters and Moelker reported that the Dutch claimed they were forced to mount guard duty more often than the Germans, and they were accommodated in tents instead of huts like the Germans. Germans also deployed in armored vehicles, while the Dutch were not, and the Dutch were also given more dangerous areas to patrol. Overall, the Dutch perception was that the Germans received more luxuries than they did. The Dutch commented that they did not have problems with Afghans, only with the Germans (King 2007, 245).

#### Observations from Lebanon

Four European countries along with Muslim and Arab countries have contributed forces to the Lebanon peacekeeping mission since 2006. Countries are motivated to participate for different reasons. Italy, for example, desires to become a more prominent force in Europe. Germany wishes to improve its military reputation, and Turkey desires to join the European Union and increases its influence in its region. These different motivations were reflected at the tactical level with the interpretation of the rules of engagement (ROE), willingness to engage in combat, and the level of national caveats and restrictions imposed on units. These different national goals can interfere with leader's ability to effectively command a multinational unit. Many times this was demonstrated by the unwillingness of some units to move beyond specific areas and come to the aid of other nations' troops. In addition, some units were enabled to take greater operational risk than other contingents. This created the appearance of unfairness and hampered the cohesion among contingents (Elron 2007, 98-99).

Belgian troops who were deployed in Tibnin, south Lebanon from 2006 to 2007 reported that they had problems working with countries which were not familiar with NATO standards and operating procedures. Belgian and Polish troops merely cohabitated in the same camp. Although soccer matches were organized a few times during the deployment, the Belgians and the Poles did not work together well. This was due to several reasons. One is the Poles worked from Monday to Friday, while the Belgians worked seven days a week. Additionally, the Poles did not have alcohol limitations, while the Belgians did. Another reason for limited contact was weak English proficiency among Polish personnel (Resteigne and Soeters 2007, 185-196).

#### Moroccan Army Experience

The Moroccan Royal Armed Forces contributes troops to many peacekeeping operations in Africa, South America, and Europe. The Royal Armed Forces is composed of many ethnicities (Arabs, Berbers, and Saharans) and two main religions (Muslim, Jewish). Consequently, the Royal Armed Forces operates in a multicultural environment even before the deployment. Despite this internal diversity, researchers reported that working in multinational units with various nationalities and religions caused additional stress on Royal Armed Forces personnel. To mitigate this stress and to make adaptation easier for the personnel, all units before deployment execute a cohesion exercise. The exercise is also aimed at standardizing the training received before from different regions. Exercises allowed the personnel to accomplish physical training and technical preparation, increase unit cohesiveness, and ensure better personal effectiveness during the adaptation process (El Houdaïgui 2007, 123-130).

## Homosexuality in the Multinational Environment

The following case studies describe examples when mainly openly homosexual personnel from non-American countries work with U.S. personnel in multinational military units or missions.

Colonel René Holtel, the Royal Netherlands Army, served as Chief of Staff of the Observer Group in a UN peacekeeping operation. He openly admitted his homosexual orientation at a staff meeting; by doing that he clearly stated his guidelines toward gays. He had developed a good working relationship with other nations' personnel and it was not disrupted by his disclosure. No one approached him to discuss his orientation. Holtel observed that UN operations have more important issues to address than gay issues, such as skin color, being NATO or non-NATO, and gender of personnel.

Major Philip Edwards, Canadian Armed Forces, served on the liaison staff of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and worked directly with two Pentagon agencies. He developed a good working relationship with US military and civilian personnel. National identity did not threaten these relationships. Based on this friendly climate, Edwards eventually revealed his homosexual orientation. His subsequent disclosure did not cause any troubles with US personnel nor impede his successful working performance.

Lieutenant Rolf Kurth, British Royal Navy, served on an amphibious ship and worked closely with US personnel during the recent Iraq war. He openly admitted his homosexual orientation, and it was common knowledge on the ship. Kurth reported that he established positive working relationships with US personnel despite being gay (Bateman and Dalvi 2004, 14-25).

### Other Historical Examples

Stewart and others interviewed ten senior British commanders from all services, who had experience in multinational operations. Interviewees pointed out that restrictions on disclosure of information and different ROE can hamper multinational relations. For example, one contingent required a written order to leave the barracks and go on patrol. Another observation was the ability to adapt leadership style regarding those under command and focusing on consensus is very important. Informal social gatherings such as different nations eating and drinking together are an important facilitator of cohesion and create common objectives and a good climate in multinational units. Interviewees also reported that some nations use a mission command style, while others practice a more centralized approach with detailed orders. Using mission command with people who do not understand it may create chaos. Mutual understanding and effective communication is also important for success. Interviewees observed language difficulties and differences in interpretation of information or commander's intent among different nations (Stewart et al. 2004).

An example from the UN coalition during Korean War showed tensions between Greeks and Americans. The Greeks required live female lambs for their religious customs. US personnel provided them lambs, but not female ones, because they were unaware of this requirement. Greeks were offended by US insensitivity to their customs, and the Americans felt unappreciated for their efforts. Religion also dictates what kind of food can or cannot be eaten. Muslims cannot eat pork and Hindus cannot eat beef. Coalition forces in Korea also faced problems, because Asians wanted rice and Europeans wanted more bread as a side dish (Bowman 1997, 9-10).

Unsolved issues and historical grudges between countries can result in tensions in current multinational units. The establishment of the Italian-Hungarian-Slovenian multinational brigade provides a good example. Italy occupied a part of Slovenian territory in the past; consequently certain elements of Slovenian society questioned the legitimacy of this multinational unit. Furthermore, the unit designation “Julia Alpina” was not accepted, because an Italian unit with the same name conducted many harsh attacks on Slovenian territory during World War II. All Slovenian candidates for positions in the brigade Headquarters were all volunteers (Jelušič in Pograjc 2008, 146).

All these examples from the field share one commonality. In the multinational military environment there are many ongoing challenges that cannot be resolved, but many of them can be managed. These challenges can be broadly organized into four factors: organizational, situational, personnel, and leadership. Many of these issues are influenced by an overriding factor, and that is culture. Others problems include with intelligence sharing, increasing technology shortfalls and lack of logistic capabilities. Factors addressed above are described in detail in chapter 4.

### Validity and Credibility of the Research

The author designed the research to identify factors and circumstances that cause problems for leaders in multinational units and deduce recommendations leaders might use to facilitate cohesion in these units. A question arises should these recommendations be used and generalized for all multinational units. The results from the thesis should be used as a basic framework that provides leaders tools to create cohesive multinational units. The results offer guidance on recommended leadership qualities and tools which can be utilized and modified based on the circumstances and the type of multinational

unit. On the other hand, the outcome of the research may suggest just one way of looking at the issue of cohesion in multinational units.

### Summary and Conclusions

The third chapter described the research methodology used to answer the research questions while trying to discover how a leader can facilitate unit cohesiveness so a multinational unit can more effectively face modern military operations. This chapter discussed the research questions, how information was obtained, the advantages and disadvantages of the methods used, historical examples from the field, and validity of the outcomes.

The next chapter will present research results and answer the research questions. Chapter 4 will determine effective leader behaviors and processes in multinational units with assistance of evidence provided by the oral group interview, examples from the field, and interpretation of previously summarized literature. The research will attempt to remain focused on the most important leader qualities and factors while considering multiple perspectives.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

Military cohesion is based on people uniting for a common mission or purpose, not based on the group consisting of a common race, creed, or gender.

— Martha McSally

#### Introduction

Chapter 3 outlined in detail the research method applied in this thesis and provided historical examples from the multinational environment in the recent past. This chapter presents the findings of the research. The organization of chapter 4 is based on research questions. It starts with analyzing and answering secondary questions, which are: What is cohesion? What particular factors must a leader consider while facilitating cohesion in a multinational unit? How does national heterogeneity influence cohesion and performance in multinational units? What are the qualities a leader must possess to facilitate cohesion in a multinational unit? What are the tools a leader can use to foster cohesion in a multinational unit? Exploring the answers to the secondary questions will provide the answer to the primary research question of: Given a multinational battalion or lower, how might a leader facilitate cohesion in multinational units?

#### Secondary Question 1: What is Cohesion?

The findings from literature and the group interview clearly show that cohesion is still believed to be very important to unit performance and effectiveness. Therefore, unit cohesion is a very desirable characteristic which is sought in many endeavors such as business and the sports environment, but especially in the military.

Many researchers have studied the phenomenon of cohesion and have provided an extensive number of different points of view on this research topic. These researchers have defined cohesion quite differently. This lack of consensus creates misunderstandings and confusion. Unfortunately, there has not been a universally accepted definition of cohesiveness. In addition, cohesion is mainly an intangible characteristic. Although there have been some studies which tried to measure cohesion through surveys, cohesion is such an abstract and complex term that it is very difficult to quantify.

As discussed before, cohesiveness is a characteristic which enables individuals to form a group, it prevents people from leaving the group and it is an important motivation factor for a group to cooperate actively and accomplish the mission. The most common distinction in the broadest sense is between social cohesion and task cohesion.

Social cohesion is related to friendship and interpersonal relationships, while task cohesion is oriented toward common goals and teamwork. Many scholars claim task cohesion is more important than social cohesion. According to Janis, strong social cohesion may cause “groupthink” and therefore has a negative effect on unit readiness. According to Manning, strong social cohesion in the special forces may cause elitism and less compliance with higher command orders (MacCoun 1993, 297). These negative effects do not mean that social cohesion should be discounted, because there are many examples which show the importance and positive effects of social cohesion. Two scholars opine that, with regard to relationship cohesion – unit performance, performance is equally dependent on both; social and professional (task) cohesion (Ahronson in Eberman 2002, 21).



Based on the group interview with international officers from eleven countries it was unanimously agreed that cohesion is very important. All participants felt that unit cohesion is absolutely necessary to achieve unity of effort. The debate between scholars regarding which cohesion is more important can be complemented with findings from the interview. Based on the interview comments, both, social and task cohesion have been recognized as prerequisites for military unit success. Moreover, social and task cohesion complement each other and usually cannot exist in a military unit without each other. The interviewees did not prioritize one type of cohesion over the other, but expressed equal necessity for both.

Social cohesion or esprit de corps is displayed through mutual respect, help, and friendship. Social cohesion is the degree to which unit members identify with other unit members. The interviewees felt that identification with other unit members can be achieved through common understanding.

Task cohesion is the degree to which unit members identify themselves with the unit's common task. It is also simply called teamwork in some studies. The interviewees also felt that a unit can achieve strong cohesion and develop good teamwork when all members associate themselves with a common goal.

In the military context, because of the nature of the military tasks themselves, cohesion is related to the degree of identification of the unit members to each other, the unit, and the common goal. In combat, common effort cannot be achieved without mutual help and caring for each other. How can comrades trust each other and establish a friendly working climate if they do not have trust in the competencies of their fellow soldiers? Cohesion is then nothing more than bonds of honesty and loyalty among unit

members. Loyalty is expressed through mutual trust and respect, and a disciplined and responsible performance of duties. Candid unit members are truthful and straightforward about their thoughts, intentions, and competencies. They also share their vision about the goal that is to be achieved. That contributes to developing unity of effort and action. Unit members who trust each other also benefit from the individual skills of other members and use those to accomplish goals. A member who possesses particular skills that the others lack can complement other members. That is also true on a larger scale among units. Teamwork can truly be achieved after the process of getting to know the strengths and weaknesses of other units has occurred. In addition, a unit with strong social cohesion tends to have better task cohesion than a unit with weak social cohesion. This is more readily apparent when one sees a group of soldiers working as a team toward a common goal and for each other, and accepting their comrades the way they are with all their faults. In combat a unit must operate as one body. Every team has its own function similar to body parts. For example, if an arm has its own will and does not obey the head, then the other parts of the body cannot rely on it and mutual trust cannot be established.

The interviewees saw respect and trust, along with mutual understanding among members in a unit and among units as a prerequisite for strong unit cohesion. The interviewees asserted cohesion is achieved and increased by continuous shared unit experiences. In this context Wong's formula for building unit cohesion appears relevant.

He defined cohesion of a unit in the form of an equation:

Stability + Stress + Success = Cohesion (Wong 1985, 34). Although the formula is still valid, it needs additional analysis.

Stability is the first requirement for cohesion. The longer a person is a member of a group, the more he respects and trusts other members, increasing cohesion. Members who stay together longer can develop common experiences. Continuous communication and high frequency of social interactions in a unit build a cohesive unit and make it stronger at the same time. Quick dissolution of units and personnel turbulence inside a unit decrease strong cohesion. On the other hand, stability can be created by leader impartiality and honesty among unit members. Similarly, several of the interviewees stressed that a leader must treat all nations the same and be impartial, to gain mutual trust of the followers. Leaders who set realistic goals and standards, and care for soldiers, develop a positive climate, which allows development of cohesion over time.

Stress also has positive effects on the cohesion process, especially when it appears in the form of an outside threat. It forces a unit to become united and to collectively aim all efforts towards the outside forces. Stress can also come from realistic, tough training. Demanding training exposes differences and allows a unit to work out those differences early. One interviewee mentioned how shock of action in combat enhances unit cohesion. Through action on the ground one can see how well each member's actions are integrated into the group. This stress enables a leader and a unit to fix problems and build the trust and respect needed. Difficult, stressful conditions cause members to show their true self and allow members to get to know each other in depth. Comrades, who know each other well, can face any kind of stress or challenge. Overcoming these challenges together produces a feeling that they are more successful together in the same unit and leads to a strong cohesive unit.

Successfully performed tasks increase the status of the unit and ultimately enhance cohesion. Members of the unit are more loyal to a high status group (Wong 1985). Cohesion develops faster in units which are successful in their tasks. Some interviewees pointed out the importance of success and failure sharing in a multinational unit. They indicated that it is essential for a leader to give credit when credit is due to a successful contingent and to the whole multinational unit to build cohesion. In case of failure, it is important that a leader not publicly embarrass the particular unsuccessful contingent; instead the leader should recognize it as a failure for the whole multinational unit and use it as a learning opportunity. That is how a multinational leader gets buy in, respect, and trust from contingents. Also successful completion of training increases each unit member's self-confidence and trust in themselves. Cohesion and success form a cyclic process, meaning that successfully performed tasks also enhance unit cohesion.

A leader who builds respect and trust through shared experiences and success, influences cohesion and morale, and further affects performance and effectiveness of the multinational unit.

#### Secondary Question 2: What Particular Factors Must a Leader Consider While Facilitating Cohesion in a Multinational Unit?

National cultural and organizational differences present barriers to building a cohesive multinational unit. Historical examples from the field described in chapter 3 show that differing nationalities and genders, personal values and lifestyles, religion, leadership style, and many other factors decrease multinational unit cohesion. Unit cohesion is the outcome of good leadership. To facilitate multinational unit cohesion it is essential for a leader to understand the complexities presented by cultural, organizational

and other differences. Factors which influence unit cohesion can be broadly divided into four groups: leadership, personnel, organizational factors, and situational factors. All of these factors are influenced by an overriding factor which is culture. This subchapter reviews various differences and factors that can disrupt effective leadership and strong cohesion in multinational units.

### Cultural Differences

Culture is often the root of challenges in multinational units. Each nation brings its own national and organizational culture that is different from other nations. Cultural differences have great influence on all four cohesion factors and they are the most important component regarding multinational units. The first step to establishing a positive working climate is being awareness of cultural differences and recognizing that they are at work within multinational units (Bibikova and Kotelnikov 2001).

Cultural differences are a major area of potential friction for multinational units. These problems have existed in multinational units throughout history. Differences like religion, tolerance, work ethic, standards of living, and national traditions must be considered by leaders in multinational units to reduce or eliminate this friction (Bowman 1997, 9).

Out of cultural differences, behavioral differences and customs are the easiest to recognize, as they are readily seen. One can quickly recognize barriers created by different languages, eating different foods, and acting in different ways. Besides behavioral differences and customs there are also cognitive and value differences which are not as easy to recognize and comprehend. In this context, it is not surprising that cultural differences present barriers in multinational units.

Religion is a powerful component of cultural norms and values. It addresses the most profound existential issues of human life; e.g. freedom and inevitability, fear and faith, security and insecurity, right and wrong, sacred and profane (Said and Funk 2001, 37-38). Religion is deeply ingrained in individual and social conceptions of environment and it can potentially cause conflicts in a multinational unit. Multinational unit contingents may consist of a great variety of religions: Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox Christian, Islam, Buddhism, and others. Each may have special requirements, including different types of food allowed, time for prayer, religious holidays, fasting, and others. Sometimes the differences may be unbridgeable and provide a substantial barrier to high unit cohesion.

Language is a system of symbols that people use to communicate with one another and is a learned element of culture (U.S. Army, Command and General Staff College 2009, 332). Common language is usually the first and most visible denominator of national culture. One scholar states that social groups are clearly separated from one another with the use of a common group language (Hewstone et al. 1996, 360).

Many multinational units face the problem of multiple spoken languages. Language barriers and lack of understanding can lead to miscommunications in performing missions. In a multinational organizational culture a common language should be used. Most analysts agree that English should be the common language for coalitions to overcome the language barriers and ensure effective communication (Bowman 1997, 6). Working in second languages can be difficult or impossible. For example, many of the old Eastern Block countries' officers speak only Russian. Similar

difficulties exist in coalitions with French and some African contingents who speak only French.

Lack of a common terminology and use of acronyms and abbreviations also creates additional problems for contingents. Confusing terminology and different use of technical terms could cause mission failure. Orders should be developed with a full and clear description of tasks, instead of a desire for brevity as is the case in most NATO and US operation orders (Bowman 1997, 7).

Communicating between two cultures is more than just language, it also involves nonverbal communication. Different cultural norms regarding degree of assertiveness in communication can lead to misunderstandings. Use of common universal languages, such as mathematics and engineering, pictures, sketches, and photographs can be an effective communication tool for most cultures (McFarland 2005, 4-5).

### Organizational Factors

ROE determine use of force by military means and are usually established for a specific operation. Some problems with the ROE are that each nation has a different ROE philosophy. Some nations understand ROE as descriptive, while others as prescriptive. For some nations ROE are integral to crisis management. In these cases firing a weapon is the last resort. Other nations are more aggressive. US troops and Canadian troops, facing the same situation and using the same ROE, would probably react in different ways (Homan 2008, 107).

Different nations have different national goals and caveats. Each nation's political view has great influence on these issues. Caveats and different national goals have a negative influence on the lowest level of multinational unit cohesion. Some countries

contribute their troops to maintain links with influential countries as a guarantee for stability while others want to buy access to western alliances (Antczak 2005, 6). Different national goals and caveats may conflict with unity of effort and negatively affect motivation and cohesion of units at lower tactical levels.

Unit cohesion is also influenced because not all countries can provide military units with equal military capabilities. Shortfalls may occur due to different capabilities in communication equipment, vehicles, logistic support, and intelligence. Some units lack basic equipment like body armor, night vision devices and radios, because their countries cannot afford high military costs. It is extremely difficult to execute missions with a multinational unit comprised of units with different, incompatible equipment. Further on, intelligence sharing among different units is necessary to accomplish missions. Smaller nations often do not have intelligence capabilities, so they have to rely on coalition sources.

Multinational units face different organizational structure issues as well. Some units have a more open and egalitarian structure and less hierarchical control than others. Vertical communication can be very formal or conversely very informal. Also, internal organizational processes may vary. Some nations have the tendency to use more informal communication and have a relaxing climate, while others have very formal procedures. Western countries follow strict agendas at formal meetings, while others like socializing in a relaxed manner. These issues may cause problems in building mutual trust and unit cohesion.



## Personnel Differences

Personnel differences also exist between military contingents in multinational units. These differences include: financial differences, serving status and composition of units.

Many times personnel from different countries performing the same work will not be paid the same. Soldiers who receive lower rates may feel undervalued and have a lower level of commitment and work performance. Soldiers with a lower pay rate may not be able to informally socialize with others because of financial problems.

Furthermore, in multinational units there may be differences in work hours and vacation allowances. These factors can have a negative impact on unit cohesion. The diversity in economic conditions of national contingents may be problematic for a multinational unit leader due to these frictions and perceptions.

The composition of military contingents can consist of personnel of a differing serving status. For example, multinational units can involve personnel from the reserves and the regular forces. Sometimes reservists are not seen as professional as compared to the regular forces (Winslow 1999). These beliefs may cause negative attitudes by regular forces toward reservists.

In addition, some countries still practice conscription while others field all-volunteer professional military forces. Conscription can be based on all male citizens of a certain age or some other form of obligatory service. In these cases questions may arise as to the level of commitment, willingness, and teamwork of the conscripts. These issues become more complex in multinational units. Combining a conscript force with an all-

volunteer force could lead to a decline in unit cohesion because of the perceptions each has of the other (Winslow 1999).

The composition of military contingents will also vary on the basis of gender and sexual orientation. Some nations exclude women completely from military service, others restrict their involvement. On the other hand many nations, like Canada, Sweden, and Slovenia, permit women in all roles, including combat roles. Interaction between personnel in multinational units may be affected by the presence of women in one force and their absence in others. Soldiers from more traditional societies and those who are not used to women in combat roles may have difficulties taking orders from female officers or even simply valuing a woman's advice. Dealing with women in close proximity in a traditional all-male environment can also cause stress and hinder the development of good working relationships (Winslow 1999). Some argue that integrating women into military units hinders the close relationship and social bonds among men that is necessary to build and sustain unit cohesion. Some soldiers and leaders believe that women in a traditional male military society have a negative effect on the strength of social bonds among men and decrease cohesiveness of units and consequentially unit effectiveness (Dupuy 1993, 2948).

Some nations permit openly gay and lesbian personnel and others may not. Social, religious, and national biases against homosexuals can lead to problems in multinational units. Homosexuals are less visible than women and they may cause less tension. However, for some nations involvement of gays and lesbians in multinational units may be offensive, while other nations are more open regarding sexual orientation and have no issues with it.

The level of expertise and training may vary greatly from one national military to another. In multinational units more experienced and better trained officers and soldiers encounter difficulties working with unskilled personnel. Frustration among contingent nations may threaten group cohesion and morale, and ultimately, multinational unit effectiveness.

### Situational Factors

Every situation, in which a military operation takes place, is different. The way a leader acts in one situation may lead to success, while leading to failure in another. Situational factors like boredom, combat stress, insufficient information from leaders causing rampant rumors, and instability of unit personnel decrease unit cohesiveness (Jazbec 2009, 87). The time units spend together, stability of personnel, and stress in the multinational environment need special consideration.

Time, specifically the amount of time, is an important ingredient in forming a trusting relationship and building cohesion. In multinational operations, there is little time to form trust relationships. Crises often demand the establishment of rapid trust relationships among individuals, units and organizations (Elron et al. 1999, 75-77). Building rapid trust depends on many factors, like reputation, presumption of trustworthiness, possible future interaction, and others. When multinational units are deployed, soldiers and units must often work together for the first time. Different national contingents often arrive into theater at different times and their deployments vary in duration. Some nations deploy their units for as short as four months, while others stay in the theater as long as twelve months. Stability of personnel in multinational unit is

hindered by these circumstances and consequently unit cohesion suffers because of this turbulence in personnel and units.

Army doctrine defines stress as “the body’s and mind’s process for dealing with uncertain change and danger” (Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1-1). Jazbec defines combat stress as the soldier’s response to strains and dangers in combat. Humans have a natural danger response, although the type of response is closely connected to national and organizational culture, and “weakness” is not well accepted in the military culture (Jazbec 2008, 13).

Since elimination of stress is both impossible and undesirable in military operations (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1994, 1-1) one should take a closer look at the stressors. There are many diverse stressors in multinational operations, including: monotony, climate and weather change, poor living conditions, as well as the risk of enemy attack. One can see the multinational environment itself as a stressor on leaders and soldiers in many ways: working with other nations, an unfamiliar chain of command, and a language barrier (Jelušič and Garb 2008, 87-90). Having to communicate in another language may create significant problems for leaders and soldiers. Culture shock possibly derived from facing the local population, different habits, language and customs, excessive garbage, seeing people suffering from conflict, and poverty are circumstances which cannot be completely replicated in pre-deployment training (Jelušič and Garb 2008, 91).

Jazbec, in his research on the Slovenian Army deployments in the Balkans and Afghanistan identified the following stress areas: uncertainty of the operation, poor communication with family, inadequate relaxation opportunities, distrust toward local

population, poor cohesion, work overload, and bad food. The poor cohesion mentioned previously appeared to result primarily from different deployment cycles among national contingents. This helped to create an atmosphere of distrust among those more experienced in the theater with those less experienced, and caused perceptions of different tactical proficiency.

A leader can generate additional negative stress in the first stage of deployment. German, Swiss, Swedish, and Slovenian Armed Forces research data indicates that the level of trust in leaders at all levels and vertical cohesion is much lower in the beginning of the deployment than prior to (Jelušič and Garb 2008, 92). This lower level of trust and vertical cohesion appeared to result from leader directed high-demanding additional training. This was intended to achieve rapid development of high effectiveness, strong cohesion and climate acclimatization at the beginning of deployment, but it proved counterproductive (Jazbec 2008, 87).

Cohesion is an important factor of combat stress control (Jazbec 2008, 131; Headquarters, Department of the Army 1994, 1-1; Jelušič and Garb 2008, 84). Leaders and subordinates can reduce some of the stressors listed previously and contribute to stronger cohesion by having a positive attitude toward “new guys,” and abstaining from spreading rumors and panic (Jazbec 2008, 131).

### Leadership

Leaders in military contingents involved in multinational units, have national differences in command philosophy, authority to act, and concepts of leadership. Two main command philosophies are mission command and centralized command. Leaders from NATO countries accustomed to mission command often have to employ centralized

command when commanding contingents who practice that kind of command. Inability to do so, may lead to friction and impede decision making tempo (Stewart et al. 2004, 6).

Additionally, authority to act and make decisions may be given to lower ranks in some contingents and higher ranks in others. Captains and Majors may be given relative high decision-making autonomy in some contingents, while in other contingents the Lieutenant Colonel level is the lowest independent rank (Stewart et al. 2004, 7). Non-commissioned officers and soldiers used to certain key decision makers in their national contingents may be confused and experience difficulties when the standardized practice changes in the multinational environment. A leader of a multinational unit comprised of many nations will probably encounter problems trying to identify key decision makers and employing his command philosophy on other nation's soldiers (Stewart et al. 2004, 7).

Similarly, diverse values and beliefs in different cultures influence the concept of leadership. Lewis claims that authority might be based on achievement, wealth, education or charisma, depending on the nation (Lewis 2000). Leadership in some societies is based on an authoritative and decision making structure that is more hierarchical. In others, leadership is more democratic and the decision making structure is more collaborative (Lewis 2000).

The majority of the above mentioned issues are influenced by national and organizational cultures. These issues exist and will continue to exist in the future. Leaders of multinational units must confront these issues and overcome them, because it is not likely they will otherwise be resolved. To foster multinational unit cohesion a leader must gain awareness of the factors, develop an understanding of the factors, and take them into

consideration in his action. A leader cannot make all the factors disappear, but with understanding and thoughtful attention to the factors he can leverage the importance of the factors and build stronger cohesion in multinational units.

### Secondary Question 3: How Does National Heterogeneity Influence Cohesion and Performance in Multinational Units?

The third secondary question continues to deal with national heterogeneity in multinational units. Multinational coalitions are very complex compositions of leaders and subordinates who represent diverse national and organizational cultures. Every nation's armed forces are organized in a different way, even though they are similar to some extent. Every army operates somewhat differently. They have different doctrines, levels of training, concepts, decision-making procedures, technology, etc. Scholars attribute these differences to the culture of nation, army, and the environment. Consequently, leaders and soldiers in multinational environments encounter cultural differences within multinational units. The findings from literature and the group interview suggest that overall multinational units are less cohesive. Despite these findings it was discovered that multinational units can often be far more capable and effective than homogeneous national units.

An old idiom offers that "birds of a feather flock together," another one says that "opposites attract." The findings support the former wisdom as stronger, despite the fact some interviewees disagreed with it. People are generally more attracted to people with similar attitudes, norms, values, and language. Common culture provides a solid basis for integration and cohesion. Homogeneous units have already established ties between members and thus it is easier and faster to establish a common unit culture. Personnel in

homogeneous units normally report a higher level of cohesiveness than personnel in heterogeneous units. Diversity in multinational units hinders integration and cohesion (Moelker and Van Ruiten 2007, 171-173).

The interviewees agreed that cultural differences as an overriding factor, disrupts multinational unit cohesion, because it influences the majority of other factors discussed in previous subchapters. All the factors discussed earlier are seen as barriers. The more of those factors that are present, the harder it is to work together effectively. The more the multinational units have in common, the fewer problems they will have working together. The majority of interviewees agreed the larger the geographical distance between countries and the more significant national cultures differences, the harder it is to work together. One interviewee opined that geography is not a major factor, for example, the USA and Australia have similar cultures regardless of geographical distance. Difference in languages was seen as a significant problem by some interviewees, while different religions were not. The interviewees also felt that common combat experiences bring multinational units together despite cultural differences. On the other hand, one interviewee argued the bigger distance and diversity, the easier to work together. He felt that neighbors often have historical conflicts because of their close proximity and therefore have difficulty getting past prior negative experiences and thus cohesion is hindered.

Several interviewees also stressed the importance of the organizational factors. They felt different national capabilities and equipment is more problematic than divergent national goals and the ROE. Contingents with notable military equipment differences can generate serious issues. Firstly, larger nations cannot equip every



contingent with its own equipment (i.e. radio systems, vehicles, ammunition) to overcome the capability gap. Secondly, soldiers from different units using different equipment when accomplishing the same mission feel unequal and perceive their safety as less important.

Regarding national caveats and divergent goals, several interviewees felt that the majority of them can be overcome at the tactical level. Personal friendship and the fact they are all soldiers can overcome national and political views. In the field national caveats do not really matter, because all the soldiers feel the same. One interviewee gave an example, when soldiers from a different nation were in trouble; he helped regardless of the different political views because “soldiers help soldiers.” Even so, the interviewees agreed different expectations, national goals, and ROE cause confusion, decrease cohesion, and affect combat effectiveness.

Personnel issues also create problems. Several interviewees specifically suggested that the biggest problem and the most important discriminator are different levels of training and discipline. It was pointed out that a lower level of professionalism and tactical expertise in less developed countries (i.e. African countries) posed a challenge to unit cohesion. Regarding the conscripts and reservists versus professional soldiers, interviewees felt that is more of a mental problem or a stereotype than a real issue. Sometimes one has an expectation that he cannot rely on a conscript and he assumes they are not very professional, but in reality they have always been very professional. The real issue lies in the standard of training and discipline, it does not matter whether they are conscripts or professionals.

Many interviewees felt similar about the issues involving militaries with gays and women. When gay individuals and women are professional and they achieve training standards there is no problem working with them. When personnel have a problem working with women and gay individuals within their own army, then they will probably have issues with another nation's army. Additionally, even nations with similar cultures can sometimes have problems with differing rules regarding personnel. For example, many countries which have a culture similar to the US, do not care about homosexuality in the military and cannot understand what the problem is for the US. Interviewees agreed that personnel need to understand other nations' culture and may have to alter their practices and find a middle ground.

Findings from the case studies in chapter 3 also suggest that the presence of homosexuals in multinational units in which US personnel serve has not had a negative impact on unit cohesion. Strong leadership and clear guidance is necessary to prevent problems should they appear (Bateman and Dalvi 2004, 14-25).

Findings from the group interview on situational factors, like how much time units spent together, vary depending on different interviewees. They all agreed respect and trust is not something a unit just shows up with, but that it must be earned. Interviewees saw combined training and common exercises before missions as a prerequisite for stronger multinational unit cohesion.

The interviewees who have conducted combined training in the past saw it very beneficial for cohesion, because they could exchange experiences, get familiar with other's doctrine, framework, and operational procedures, and observe firsthand how the other nation's soldiers act under certain circumstances. During the training mutual trust

can be developed, so when they come together in the multinational unit, the unit is immediately able to work well and does not have to start from scratch. Unfortunately, it is not a common practice that the units, who train together, are actually deployed together.

The interviewees who have not conducted combined training blamed lack of resources, capabilities, and time as primary reasons. Small countries are usually required to allocate their available budgetary resources on the actual deployment, making combined pre-deployment exercises too expensive for their limited military budget. In addition, some interviewees from countries with adequate military funds have never conducted combined pre-deployment training for unknown reasons. They received other contingents on the ground during the deployment.

Different deployment timelines for national contingents also present obstacles for cohesion. Only a minority of interviewees said that they deployed at the same time as other contingents in the multinational unit. Usually deployment times differ due to different rotational cycles and respective national military's capabilities (logistical chains). These diverse timelines reduce stability in a multinational unit.

Although heterogeneity in multinational units has disadvantages, it also has many advantages. Obviously, on the political level multinational units have more legitimacy than single nation's units. This is significant because legitimacy serves as a main long-term objective of all multinational operations.

Gibson's research suggests that homogeneous cultural teams are more satisfied and experience more positive reactions, whereas multicultural teams had higher creativity. Homogeneous teams often find similarities which help them build team

cohesion, while heterogeneous teams can become more creative if afforded the authority to exercise initiative (Gibson 2004, 2-3).

Cultural differences in multinational units may present potential friction; but it can also increase effectiveness. Watson claims that heterogeneous units outperform homogeneous units in all circumstances. Van der Zee observed that high diversity in units facilitates creative and innovative work. This is achieved by considering multiple points of view, thus increasing the efficient and accurate appraisal of ambiguous situations (Moelker and Van Ruiten 2007, 171).

Cognitive differences based on different cultures can generate a greater number of new ideas and higher quality solutions. This can be seen during planning when discussing alternative solutions and also in the diverse approaches seen when executing missions. These diverse planning and executing processes maximize a multinational unit's effectiveness. The interviewees stressed multinational units can be more effective, because they bring more to the table, meaning a variety of skill sets and knowledge. For example, some units are better in tactics, while others can be used for their technical skills or their understanding of local culture, terrain, and language. Therefore, multinational units can be more successful which consequently enhances cohesion as posited by Wong.

In addition, findings from literature and the group interview support that there is a common military culture between multinational forces despite the differences discussed earlier. Interestingly, Soeters and Manigart claim that in spite of cultural differences between individual armed forces a certain transnational military culture exists. When compared with the civilian environment this transnational military culture is more

collectively oriented, hierarchically organized, and it is not primarily profit driven. For this reason military personnel, regardless of different cultural backgrounds, can cooperate with each other without any major difficulties. Moskos even claims that military personnel coming from different cultural backgrounds find it easier to work together compared to civilians from non-governmental organizations and local agencies. However, certain cultural differences between individual armed forces cannot be neglected (Soeters and Manigart 2008, 5-6).

The interviewees suggested that personnel in all military units have some similarities, starting with the simple fact that they all wear a uniform. Some interviewees offered another example and opined that countries which were former colonies of Great Britain have a similar military culture and values. When working in multinational units, interviewees reported drawing on similarities in military culture to bond and work together. All world militaries are similar in some way or another, for example training, basic discipline, and tactics in every military usually has a common basis. Therefore, some commonalities of the organizational culture within the militaries around the world can bridge the national culture gap.

Earley and Mosakowski (2000) have argued that effective teams develop common norms in order to operate and eventually develop shared capability expectations, which comprise a “hybrid culture” (Gibson 2004, 2-3). This does not mean that everyone on the team has the same views, but that significant mutual understanding exists. A hybrid culture may derive from the overlapping cultures of team members (e.g. organizational or functional cultures). Similarly, interviewees confirmed that overlapping military cultures (i.e. similar military behaviors and expressions) contribute to cohesion. One interviewee

mentioned that he as a U.S. Army Ranger gets along well with officers from other countries who are also Ranger qualified, because he knows they have similarities. Gibson (2002) stated that hybrid culture can also represent new patterns of team member interaction and shared understandings (Gibson 2004, 2-3).

Even with a concept such as transnational military culture, personnel in multinational units are very different from one another; therefore usually no pre-established ties exist. Keller and Tomforde even argued that there is no single military culture; however they admitted militaries do have common features (2007, 144). Certainly, national militaries differ just as one can see differences between branches of a single nation's military. If time and opportunities for interaction permit, common operational culture in a multinational unit will be developed. Theory suggests that multinational units with only two or three national contingents have a lower level of cohesion and team spirit. Highly heterogeneous multinational units will tend to have higher cohesion and good performance (Moelker and Van Ruiten 2007, 173).

#### Secondary Question 4: What are the Qualities of a Multinational Leader?

This subchapter focuses on the additional qualities a multinational unit leader requires that are distinctive from those in a homogeneous national unit. Both types of leaders must have virtually the same qualities, but a multinational leader requires a few additional qualities because of the added complexity found when one has the national and organizational differences. These barriers or factors are illustrated in the previous chapters. Simply said, a leader in his attempt to build a cohesive multinational unit has more issues to consider, compared to a leader of a homogeneous unit. Some of the qualities that are required in the mono-cultural environment are also important in the

multinational environment. However, a multinational unit leader should require a different leadership approach than in a homogeneous unit.

Several scholars have examined leader's qualities and competences related to facilitating unit cohesion. They seem to agree on some points, while they are contradictory in other cases. It is difficult to do justice to all of them, therefore only a few are mentioned.

Leaders of cohesive teams have the following qualities: they are professionally competent, they care for and respect their subordinates, and they are committed to work and the team (Bratušek 2000, 57; Manning n.d.; Shills and Janowitz 1948, 297–299). Malone in his 11 principles for military leaders recognizes all these qualities and additionally offers: self-knowledge, clear communication, free flow of information, and employing a unit according to its capabilities (1983, 32-34). Bratušek further defines a leader as one whom: sets the example with his personal characteristics, has strong character, leads according to professional military ethics, and solves complex problems (2000, 66). Similarly, a participant in the group interview mentioned that soldiers from another contingent took his advice and acted according to it when their commander was wounded, because they saw him as a professional and therefore worthy of respect. Many other interviewees also pointed out that a leader must have authority, be professional, share hardship, and show commitment to the mission.

Iglič mentions two primary ways for a leader to achieve unit cohesion: setting a good example, meaning his behavior and actions reflect a trustworthy person, and impartiality and fairness in resolving conflicts (2006, 145). Hamburger agrees that leading by example is the principal characteristic of successful leadership (2001, 288).

One interviewee described an event involving fairness when his soldiers were relieving soldiers from another contingent. A multinational unit leader from the relieved contingent assigned the new unit additional check points which were also in more dangerous areas. The new unit felt betrayed and they considered that leader unfair, biased, and partial. Other interviewees also pointed out that leader impartiality can be expressed through discipline and simple actions such as applying standards equally across all contingents.

Similarly, S.L.A. Marshall describes how a leader should be friendly to his subordinates, communicate with them, be interested in soldiers' needs and overall spend as much time as possible with them to facilitate cohesion (Marshall 1947, 103). Nye agrees with him regarding care and respect for soldiers and adds focus to common unit goals and setting high training and discipline standards to achieve strong, cohesive units (Nye 1986, 44). Likewise, several interviewees stressed that communication is of immense importance. According to all interviewees, a multinational unit leader must treat all contingents equal, respect their traditions and religion, and above all treat them like soldiers; and take measures to ensure they are not made to feel like second class people, perhaps going beyond what might be expected.

Above all, the aspects most mentioned by scholars in connection to unit cohesion were technical and professional competence, respect and caring for people (interpersonal competence), communication, setting an example, impartiality, and commitment to work, team, and common goals.

In addition, commonly referenced successful leadership competencies include: integrity/honesty, diversity consciousness, developing influence skills, emotional



intelligence, and innovation (Pagon, Banutai, Bizjak 2008, 2; Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, A-1).

Why is a leader's competency noteworthy? Individual competencies are the foundation for adequate leadership behavior (Seiler 2007, 220). With the exception of a leader's personal traits, values, and actions, the leader's competencies play a very important role. Competencies enable a leader to successfully perform tasks, play different roles and solve problems in different situations. Competency depends on three factors: working situation, the individual, and organization (Kohont and Naglič 2006, 170-174).

The terms competence and intelligence are both commonly used words. However, competence suggests that a leader or a person is meeting the basic minimum requirement, while intelligence means that someone has developed a higher degree of abilities (Peterson 2004, 87).

While there have been many leadership competency and intelligence models developed, the key question is what are, in addition to those already mentioned, the competencies or intelligences a leader needs to be successful in coping with the challenges in the context of multinational units. The focus is on those leadership competencies a leader requires to activate and connect the knowledge gained in complex and unpredictable situations to influence cohesion in a multinational unit.

As mentioned, leaders of multinational units should be aware of cultural differences and also explore cultural similarities. Waddell states a leader should be considerate of language barriers and have some knowledge of the history and culture of the contributing nations (Waddell 1994). But there is much more to this. In multinational units, it is essential that a leader can influence and unite different thoughts and feelings

that come from different cultures. For a leader to successfully navigate the situation and build strong unit cohesion, he has to have multiple additional qualities than those mentioned above.

Yee developed the theory of multiple intelligences which covers social or interpersonal, cultural, and emotional intelligence. This theory concludes that it is not necessarily true that people whose social intelligence is high (ability to successfully interact with people from the same environment) also have a high level of CQ (it is not necessary that they will successfully interact with people from a different cultural environment) (Yee et al. 2005, 5-6).

The U.S. Army's current leadership model promotes self-awareness and adaptability in leaders. Each of these elements is a competency of emotional intelligence (Sewel 2009, 95). Competencies that demonstrate emotional intelligence are according to Goleman, the most important out of three domains of leadership skills (Moore and Rudd 2004, 23). The five components of emotional intelligence are: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill (Moore and Rudd 2004, 23). Self-awareness and adaptability are described as meta-competencies by the Army Training and Leader Development Model, which means they represent the basis for all other competencies (Thomas 2006, 110). Additionally, self-awareness as knowledge of one's strengths, weaknesses, and nature is a prerequisite to adaptability (Thomas 2006, 110).

Adaptability is a very important leadership characteristic which enables finding acceptable solutions in ambiguous situations and promoting teamwork (Baš 2004, 74). In a multinational environment adaptability refers to the preparation of leaders and their units to operate in diverse environments. Cultural awareness is recognized as one of the

means to develop cultural adaptability (Ulibarri 2008, 1). Cultural adaptability, which refers to the ability to understand one's own and others cognitive biases and adapt as necessary, is vital for effective multinational cooperation (Yanakiev 2007, 204).

Adaptable leaders, who know how to lead across cultures, strive to attain as much cultural knowledge as possible to adapt and be successful (Whiffen 2007, 113-114).

Results from the group interview revealed that a lack of adaptability can hinder cohesion. The interviewees also provided some examples of good leadership adaptability. One interviewee gave an example of two contingents not being able to exchange information because of rules prohibiting the exchange of classified information. They found an imaginative way to work around that issue by providing only relevant portions of the classified documents. Another example is when a nation has a certain way of operating or lacks capabilities. A multinational unit leader must be adaptable and innovative enough to employ that unit according to its capabilities in the best way possible, yet still challenging enough for that unit.

Next to adaptability, empathy is another component of emotional intelligence. Garner claimed empathy fosters better communication, stronger discipline, enhances cohesion, and builds trust (Garner 2009, 84-85). US Army doctrine defines empathy as the ability to experience something from another person's perspective and identify with another person's feelings and emotions (Headquarters, Department of the Army 2006, A-10). Empathy is therefore placing oneself in someone else's shoes. Empathy is connected with sensitivity for another person's feeling and differences. Empathy is a powerful learned interpersonal skill and one of the most important qualities in developing mutual relationships, but it does not mean that someone agrees with another person's position or

views. It does, however, mean that one acknowledges another's thoughts and concerns (Garner 2009, 84-86).

As already recognized, a multinational unit leader has an additional challenge, because he has to deal with many different military and national cultures. In addition to emotional and interpersonal intelligence a leader has to possess CQ.

Next to CQ, other terms like cultural competence, cultural awareness, cultural literacy, intercultural competence, cultural capability, and others are in use. CQ is defined by Peterson as "the ability to engage in a set of behaviors that uses skills (i.e., language or interpersonal skills) and qualities (e.g., tolerance for ambiguity) that are tuned appropriately to the culture-based values and attitudes of the people with whom one interacts" (Peterson 2004, 89). Thomas and Inkson (2003) defined CQ as a system of interacting knowledge and skills linked by cultural meta-cognition that allows people to adapt, to select and to shape the cultural aspects of their environment (Seiler 2007, 221).

McFarland made a distinction between cultural literacy and cultural competency. Cultural literacy is defined as understanding individual cultural patterns and knowing one's own cultural norms (2005, 4). A leader of a multinational unit has the additional challenge to understand other cultures as well. Cultural competency as a critical leadership competency is demonstrated through a leader's ability to cross cultural divides that exist within units and build successful teams with a common vision, communication, and acceptable processes that benefit from cultural diversity (McFarland 2005, 2).

Yee and others pointed out that a military leader, to be culturally competent in a multinational operation, needs to have the meta-cognitive skills (to understand and appreciate other cultures including other military or national cultures, and how these

cultures differ from one's own), cognitive skills (to acquire the different cultural knowledge), motivation (to learn about other cultures and operate with their military and non-military counterparts and hosts), and behaviors (to execute culturally-appropriate verbal and non-verbal messages) (Yee et al. 2005, 9).

Participants in the group interview recognized cultural awareness and understanding as key qualities of a multinational unit leader. They stressed that a leader must possess knowledge on different cultures, religions, and be aware of the existing differences and try to use them to the unit's benefit. Several interviewees added that a leader's failure to be aware, understand, properly communicate, and behave creates problems and hinders unit cohesion.

Another interesting classification of competencies worth mentioning is a conceptual framework for three key individual competencies for successful life and well-functioning. One of the competencies is the ability to interact in heterogeneous groups. Leaders and soldiers involved in multinational operations encounter people from a range of different cultures. Researchers classified competency of interaction in heterogeneous groups into three components: the ability to relate well to others (empathy, self-awareness), the ability to cooperate (construct alliances, ability to negotiate, make decisions that allow for different shades of opinion), and the ability to manage and resolve conflicts (identify areas of agreement and disagreement, reframe problem, prioritize needs and goals) (OECD n.d.).

Peterson offers a broad selection of characteristics that can lead to CQ, other researchers classified some of them under emotional and interpersonal intelligence: open-mindedness, flexibility, adaptability, appreciation for differences, creativity, willingness

to change, patience, dealing with stress, sensitivity to differences, respect for others, and empathy (Peterson 2004, 96).

Open-mindedness, appreciation for differences, and willingness to change are especially interesting. People from some cultures are reluctant to experience new situations and do not appreciate another's point of view, especially if they come from a different culture. Some people simply do not understand that if someone does not speak the same language and/or has different habits, then it does not mean that he is lacking intelligence. This relates to two aspects: being patient and tolerant enough to consider another's point of view and willingness or motivation to learn from others. For example, one scholar suggests that where leadership is concerned, the US Army culture is one of arrogance and exclusion when it comes to considering another's view on leadership, which implies that other points of view are not developed and thus the US Army's version of leadership is ahead of the curve (Pape 2009, 98). Participants in the group interview declared that besides national or organizational culture, people's behavior is also personality driven. They pointed out that learning other perspectives of work performance can broaden one's horizon. Unfortunately, some leaders are just not open-minded enough to deal with differences. According to many of the interviewees, tolerance and willingness to change is what a multinational unit leader needs and this starts with the simple question addressed to other contingent personnel: what do you think?

When it comes to appreciation and sensibility for differences, one interviewee gave a good example about consumption of alcohol. He said that his unit knew that the other unit they were working with could not drink alcohol; therefore they never drank in

front of them because they did not want to insult them and they wanted to maintain a good, respectful relationship.

Above all, the synthesis of the document study and the oral group interview shows that an effective leader of a multinational unit is a person of multiple qualities. First of all, a leader must be seen as a professional and authoritative person who sets an example. Second, a leader requires knowledge, skills, adaptability, empathy, tolerance, patience, open-mindedness to experience, and the ability to interact in heterogeneous groups. In order to be successful in facilitating cohesion in multinational units one needs to also have emotional and interpersonal intelligence, and a certain level of CQ. Leader's CQ and sensitivity to differences with regard to persons from other contingents is essential to build relationships (Stewart et al. 2004, 7). Without awareness, understanding, and respecting other contingents' culture it is difficult to build cooperation and cohesion between units. Leaders, in addition to cultural understanding and cultural sensitivity need to demonstrate appropriate actions and behaviors in their approach to subordinates to influence cohesiveness in a multinational unit.

#### Secondary Question 5: What are the Tools of a Multinational Leader?

Historically leadership and leadership styles have represented potential friction points in multinational units. The quality of leadership and type of leadership style is a key factor in determining group cohesiveness (Bass 1981; Henderson 1985; Hollander 1985). Leadership style can be defined as a set of individual methods, techniques, and leadership tactics typical of individual leaders. Leadership style is therefore a tool a leader applies to interact with his subordinates. Every leader develops a personal leadership style which is based on knowledge and abilities, traits, subordinates,

organization, and situation. A leader who wants to develop a relationship that is based on respect and trust must know subordinates' desires, concerns, and abilities in order to harmonize them with the common tasks and goals of a unit. Getting to know these characteristics is how a leader can develop a suitable leadership style. A multinational unit leader must also consider characteristics of different contingents, their type of organizational culture, type of communication, and goals while developing a leadership style.

Michalisin and others found that task leadership can contribute to stronger cohesion. Leaders should keep their subordinates focused on a shared commitment to work and completing important tasks. Social leadership also contributes to cohesion by facilitating good relationships and social interaction, encouraging respect and information sharing among members, and isolating deviants in the group. Lastly, Michalisin and others' findings suggest that a leader's influence on the development of team cohesion contributes to better performance (Michalisin et al. 2007, 5-15).

Likewise, participants in the group interview emphasized that a leader must organize social events (ice breaker parties, sports events) to overcome initial friction and facilitate cohesion. A leader should use every opportunity to increase social interaction. However, a leader must first treat people respectful and equal to motivate them to attend social events. One individual provided an example regarding the power of respect when working with soldiers from Afghanistan. Three of the interviewee's companies worked with the Afghanistan National Army units as advisors. One company worked well with them, the others did not. The one that worked well showed respect for and emphasized building mutual trust with the Afghans and they responded in kind.



Research by Slovenian scholars on unit cohesion revealed two successful leadership styles. The first one is the transformational leadership style which focuses on helping subordinates and encouraging their professional and innovative development. The second, task leadership style is a more traditional approach. It is primarily focused on completing tasks according to established procedures (Iglič 2006, 153).

In a multinational unit, national contingents with different cultural backgrounds value and respond positively to different leadership styles. Hofstede's PD appears to describe a leadership style. Differences in PD are visible in various leadership styles and can also influence the interaction between a commander and subordinates. For example, in cultures with a low PD one can find a more collaborative and egalitarian working environment with less top down decision making (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005). One may therefore ask which leadership style would be accepted by most nations. Den Hartog found that some leader's characteristics of transformational leadership (e.g. decisive, positive, just) were seen as universally positive. Other leader's characteristics (e.g. ruthless, egocentric) were seen as universally negative. Many of the characteristics listed in the research (e.g. sincerity, evasiveness, sensitivity, enthusiasm) were valued in some cultures but not in others (Den Hartog et al. 1999). Similarly, findings from the GLOBE research show that transformational (charismatic), team-oriented (social) and participating leadership styles are universally endorsed by all cultures (House et al. 2004, 2-3).

A leader using transformational leadership style builds a relationship between work and reward which is a prerequisite for implementing the leader's vision. This leadership style promotes admiration, respect, trust, motivation, and commitment to

common goals in the subordinate–leader relationship (Ahronson and Eberman 2002, 3-8).

A key component of transformational leadership is a competent leader, who tries to provide clarity of common goals and shared understanding with subordinates.

Several interviewees stressed that cultural understanding is of the utmost importance and therefore operations and a leader's behavior must be tailored to account for cultural differences. According to some of the interviewees a leader must be proactive and clearly communicate mutual expectations, shared interests, common goals, and describe the vision and standards to obtain buy in. Interviewees also stressed that a leader must work toward shared interests and common goals, and avoid the appearance of acting solely for the interests of one's own nation.

Participative leadership style allows subordinates' active participation in making most of the decisions. A leader tries to identify subordinates' goals with unit goals and also increase subordinates' influence on achieving those goals to increase effectiveness of subordinates and the whole unit. Subordinates' identification with common goals also promotes task cohesion. It must be mentioned that transformational and participative leadership styles are the more demanding types.

Many of the interviewees pointed out a leader should incorporate all contingent leaders into the multinational team early to allow them to participate in the decision making process and to avoid marginalizing them. Several interviewees commented that a leader should get input from all other nations, asking them questions on their experience and opinions, to facilitate respect and trust, and also get helpful, varying points of view.

On the other hand, leaders might also decrease trust if they use an inappropriate leadership style. Arnejčič claims that autocratic or authoritative leadership style based on

excessive obedience and less subordinated autonomy leads to negative relationships in the unit and reduction of mutual trust (2009, 28). An authoritative leader accepts all decisions without any participation of others and has total control of subordinates. Modern leadership style should avoid using excessive control and instead focus on gaining or projecting trust between the leader and subordinates as well as among soldiers (Arnejčič 2009, 28).

This might be very true in homogeneous units from western cultures. On the other hand, Lewis claims authority due to differing cultures might be based on achievement, wealth, education, or charisma (Lewis 2000). Leadership in some societies is authoritative and the decision making structure is more hierarchical. In others, leadership is more democratic and the decision making structure is collaborative (Lewis 2000). Due to the contradictions in organizational cultures between different contingents, leaders who are used to mission command are likely to have to adapt to a more centralized approach (Stewart et al. 2004, 7). This implies leaders may have to use a more authoritative leadership style in some situations.

Likewise, some interviewees stressed that a leader must meet different contingents' expectations. The interviewees mentioned that some units expect to follow specific directions and are confused in their absence. On the other hand, the interviewees asserted that other units who are more used to mission command are able to operate without detailed directions.

As mentioned before, diverse values and beliefs in different cultures influence the concept of leadership style. In addition, a multinational unit leader usually does not have full unity of command because national chains of command go down to the lowest

tactical level. To answer questions regarding the behavior and practices of leaders in such a complex environment GLOBE researchers determined that leaders who are accordant with the culture they operate in are successful leaders. Therefore, if the leadership style of a multinational unit leader is not consistent with that of the participating contingents, then one can expect problems.

To achieve success a leader has to have the ability to work collaboratively and adapt his/her command philosophy accordingly (Stewart et al. 2004, 7). Adaptation of leadership style is also of utmost importance in leading multinational units. Scholars described the most effective leaders as those who are flexible and can adapt their leadership style to fit different circumstances, subordinates, time period, and cultural contexts (Lewis 2000; Vršec 1993; Waddell 1994).

Similarly, Soeters argued that multinational unit leaders should be aware that their leadership style is not necessarily understood in the same way by different nations. Therefore leaders should show understanding and promote teamwork with shared interests and common goals (Soeters 1997). A leader can achieve this by adapting leadership styles to suit the situation and cultures of their contingents.

Some participants in the group interview pointed out that sometimes the way a national unit wants to accomplish a task differs from the usual multinational leader's way in his own unit. A leader who does not understand that this unit uses a different approach and leadership style, and refuses to adapt, will most likely cause friction.

One interviewee stressed that due to different ethical beliefs leaders may develop different ways of treating subordinates. One example he provided was physically

assaulting subordinates. This created obvious problems and tensions among other contingents who saw those acts as inappropriate and unethical.

Every leader should use a combination of different leadership styles according to the situation and type of subordinates. The composition of units and the level of professionalism are important factors. For example, a leader should use a different style when commanding experienced professional soldiers compared to lesser trained conscripts. This suggests that a leader should use a more participative and transformational leadership style with more freedom in the first case; and a more directing authoritative style with more control in the latter case, but certainly not in a humiliating manner.

Next to the differing levels of professionalism between NATO and non-NATO countries, an obvious problem is also the level of awareness in reference to that. According to the interviewees, some multinational unit leaders expect all subordinates to be able to execute certain tasks. However, if members of a contingent execute tasks and react to situations differently than expected, they might be seen as less professional and less competent. This occurs even if they meet the standards of their own national military. When a multinational unit leader cannot adapt, accept lower standards, and use that unit according to its capabilities, it creates tensions.

One should not neglect that choosing the right leadership style will increase confidence, respect, and trust in a multinational unit and consequently enhancing the unit's cohesion. Social, transformational, and participative leadership styles are universally endorsed. Overall, a leader in a multinational unit must use a leadership style that is persuasive, not coercive, and sensitive to national needs (Bowman1997, 8). A

leader using a suitable leadership style can show that he/she trusts subordinates, which has a positive effect on the climate and discipline in a multinational unit. Even so, one cannot talk of the best and the most effective leadership style that can be used universally in all situations. The ability of a multinational leader to adopt a flexible leadership style and transition from one leadership style to another, depending on the culture and situation, is paramount, because various national contingents in a multinational unit value and respond positively to different leadership styles.

Primary Question: Given a Multinational Battalion or Lower, How Might a Leader Facilitate Cohesion in Multinational Units?

The answers to the secondary questions defined the meaning of unit cohesion and enumerated the prerequisites for cohesion. Secondly, the research identified multiple factors for leader's consideration as well as determined their meaning for leaders and multinational units. Thirdly, the secondary questions examined what qualities, competencies, and leadership styles leaders acquire to lead effectively and facilitate multinational unit cohesion. The answer to the primary question sums up the essence of the leadership required for strong cohesive multinational units.

It is essential that a multinational unit leader is aware of and understands that cultural and organizational differences exist. Furthermore, the leader's next step, before a leader starts to build a cohesive multinational unit, should be sharing the obtained knowledge about the differences and benefits of various nations with all the contingents. The author of this research suggests a framework comprised of four broad components. The components of this framework were derived from the research and merge factors that have been discussed before. The thesis author suggests that a successful leader must

follow the following framework: gain awareness, develop understanding, communicate, and take action.

### Gaining Awareness

The leader's first priority when facilitating cohesion in a multinational unit is gaining awareness and establishing a knowledge base of the characteristics, capabilities, and organizational and national cultures of himself, his unit, and those various contingents within the multinational unit.

Self awareness of a leader's own culture, behavior, and leadership style is a starting point and important aspect of CQ. If leaders are aware of their own behaviors and culture, then they can more easily make comparisons with others and adjust their behavior to be compatible in a multicultural setting. People are rarely aware of how values, opinions, and attitudes relate to their own culture. Cultural norms are often so strongly entrenched in daily life that individuals might be unaware of certain behaviors (McFarland 2005, 4). In addition to culture, leaders must be aware of their own advantages and abilities which allow them to display self-confidence and professionalism. These are necessary to gain trust and respect from subordinates.

It is also important to know and be aware of others' values or motives to display proper behaviors and employ an appropriate leadership style. Awareness of cultural differences and recognizing that cultural differences are at work in multinational units is the first step to establish a positive working climate (Bibikova and Kotelnikov 2001). It is essential that a leader recognizes and is aware of the cultural factors such as national traditions, religion, and different military cultures and their influence on the multinational unit climate and mission. Surely, leaders must be aware and appreciate their own and

others' beliefs, behaviors, values, and norms. However, they must also be aware of how their own perspectives and behavior might affect the views of others with differing cultures in order to develop mutual respect and trust, and be capable of enacting culturally appropriate behaviors.

A leader must be aware of the fact that no culture is superior or inferior to others. Hofstede speaks of “cultural relativism” which means that a leader must “suspend judgment when dealing with groups or societies different from his own” (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005, 6). A leader must gain knowledge about the cultural differences between contingents which “should precede judgment and action” (ibid, 6).

Besides cultural differences, other factors such as different deployment times, composition of units, different level of professionalism and readiness, technology and equipment shortfalls, different ROE, and caveats exist. The immediate knowledge and awareness of these conditions affecting multinational operations is obtained from the observation of others and information gained. Therefore, leaders should constantly seek to build a knowledge base of other national and organizational cultures, as well as situational and personnel factors throughout their career, not just prior to their deployments. A leader must possess cognitive skills to acquire this knowledge. A leader must develop and sustain awareness that these issues may exist among contingents in a multinational unit.

Some leaders have the benefit of working within their own national military organization which may be comprised of a variety of ethnic groups, religions, and genders. This variety gives them a touch of multiculturalism and makes it easier to cope with challenges in a multinational unit. As said, knowledge base and awareness enable a



leader to avoid prejudices and negative stereotypes which can hinder unit cohesion. Sometimes nations possess predetermined prejudices, which stem from lack of accurate information, rumors, or negative experiences about another nation before they even start to work together. Stereotypes emerge when one applies perceptions of a certain individual to an entire group (Peterson 2004, 26). Negative stereotypes provide negative expectations and a group will naturally dislike others if they expect them to be lazy, unprofessional, or unethical. Two scholars developed the threat theory of prejudice, which suggests that prejudice comes from the perceived “outgroup” threat. Group members develop the perception that the “outgroup” does not support group values and beliefs (Boniecki and Britt 2003, 53-65). A sufficient knowledge base can help leaders and subordinates avoid these perceptions.

Several participants in the group interview pointed out that one of the first leader actions should be establishing a knowledge base and gaining awareness of capabilities, weaknesses, and limitations of involved national units. One interviewee stressed the importance of being aware of a certain national unit’s capabilities and using this unit according to these abilities and weaknesses. Failure to establish this awareness may cause problems. Many of the interviewees asserted that the awareness of existing differences within national units is important, because a leader can use them to benefit the whole multinational unit. According to interviewees a leader should try to mitigate differences by placing emphasis on common values and goals.

Additionally, several interviewees determined that a leader must be aware of potential political and historical tensions among nations. Even though these tensions are

not as important at the tactical level, a successful leader must be aware of them and consider these issues from the very beginning.

Unfortunately, several interviewees said that they did not conduct any cultural awareness training in their units, while others conducted cultural awareness training only for the host nation before deployment, but disregarded the other nations they eventually worked with in a multinational unit.

### Developing Understanding

A leader, who knows the background, has awareness of other cultures, and awareness of other disruptive factors in general within contingents in a multinational unit already has a great advantage. However, a leader's approach cannot be purely intellectual. If a leader intends to facilitate cohesion in multinational units and wishes to interact successfully with people, he must develop concrete understanding of the complexities presented by cultural, organizational, personnel, and other differences in a particular unit. A leader cannot eliminate all the factors, but with proper understanding and addressing them, he can reduce and leverage the importance of the factors and build stronger cohesion in multinational units.

Cultural awareness alone is insufficient. A leader has to also develop cultural understanding. McFarland states that cultural literacy is all about understanding individual cultural patterns and knowing one's own cultural norms. Multinational unit leaders have an additional challenge, because they must understand their own national and military culture and the cultures of all contingents within the multinational unit (McFarland 2005, 4). For example, a leader should understand that certain units need time for prayer, different food, and fasting time. Also, the organizational culture might be

much different. The leadership style, the manner of issuing orders, and the procedures of executing tasks may be in conflict with the organizational culture of a leader's unit. A leader's understanding of these factors might help the leader reduce tensions and facilitate cohesion.

When a leader interacts with people from foreign cultures, suddenly the situation seems different. A multinational leader might encounter difficulties in determining appropriate behavior and actions. Using Hofstede's cultural dimensions as a starting point, a leader can evaluate the approach, decisions, and actions based on a general understanding of how the contingents might think and react to a leader. To understand another's thoughts, feelings, concerns, and motives, a leader must possess empathy and cognitive abilities for cautious thinking about the other person's perspective (Garner 2009, 85). Through understanding others and paying respect to the differences, a leader starts to develop mutual understanding.

The understanding of one's own and the cultures of others as a meta-cognitive skill is an important part of CQ. Yee and others state that military leaders with CQ will be more effective in multinational operations if they are capable of making culturally sound and effective decisions. Such leaders will use an appropriate approach to understand the needs of different contingents, manage conflicts due to cultural differences, be aware of the consequences their decisions will have on the multinational unit climate, and above all, do everything to positively influence the multinational mission outcomes (Yee et al. 2005, 9-10).

Leaders also need to recognize and understand that there is a natural tendency to categorize people in a way that helps us to make sense of our own world. We assign the

people we meet to the category, or categories they most resemble. These attitudes influence how people think and feel about the others in a unit, and how people are likely to behave in the others' presence. Leaders who understand this principle will be able to use this as an advantage when necessary.

In addition to developing cultural understanding, a leader should also seek to understand all other factors that are tied to particular contingents. While awareness means knowledge in general about differences among contingents, a leader must develop understanding on concrete units, their characteristics and capabilities and their meaning. Awareness is just the beginning of an understanding process about the specific multinational unit context.

Understanding helps a leader identify various options and determine likely future actions in a multinational unit. A leader should start with building a knowledge base and assessment of contingents and their leaders before deployment and during the early deployment phase. A leader must develop an appreciation of these issues and differences, even if only a vague one, to lessen the friction within a multinational unit. Understanding the goals and capabilities of other contingents helps synchronize them with multinational unit common tasks and goals.

Leader should meet with other national contingent leaders as early as possible to make an assessment and develop a deeper understanding of the leaders' skills and unit capabilities. A leader should dedicate time to visit contingents and personally interact with subordinates to become acquainted with them. A leader must develop understanding regarding the compatibility of weapons and equipment, tactics, techniques, and procedures. It is also important to understand the degree and nature of the command

authority of the national contingents, the degree of formality and autonomy, the required oversight, their caveats, and interpretations of the ROE.

Several participants in the group interview pointed out that cultural understanding is highly important. According to some interviewees a leader should alter and adapt practices, try to achieve a consensus, and even try to tailor operations to account for different cultures. Interviewees also stated that a leader must understand and above all respect religion and the traditions of other nations, to avoid offense and achieve common understanding which contributes to unit cohesion.

Several interviewees stressed the importance of a leader's understanding of contingent's capabilities and/or lack of them, as well as the contingents' way of executing tasks, caveats, restrictions, and the political and historical tensions existing among some nations. For example, according to the interviewees, a leader could task a certain unit which lacks capabilities or has certain caveats as advisors, instead of placing them in a combat role. A leader who tasks a unit according to its capabilities and established procedures can avoid friction and enhance cohesion.

### Communicating

Communication is one of the aspects most mentioned by scholars in connection with unit cohesion. Manning points out that effective communication in all directions and clear understanding of unit tasks strongly contributes to the development and strength of unit cohesion (Manning 1991, 453-470). Once a leader gains awareness and develops understanding of the complex context of a multinational unit, its goals, and interests, then communication can take place. It is of tremendous importance for a leader to communicate effectively, but it is also very difficult to actually do so in multinational

units. A leader must create a climate of open dialogue that allows all unit members to participate without fear of belittlement. A leader respectfully communicates with all involved units on at least the following issues: differences and characteristics of units, commonalities, multinational unit interests, goals, and norms, procedures of information sharing, and potential friction areas.

A leader should start by announcing his position, mandate, and mission to all unit members (Silvela 2009, 112). Members of national contingents deploy with preconceived notions about other nations. Often these perceptions are simply prejudices and stereotypes. A multinational leader's behavior and leadership style is not necessarily understood in the same manner by different nations (Soeters 1997). Therefore, a leader must start communicating these issues and the organizational, cultural, ethical, and personal differences to achieve a common understanding and reduce perceptions. A leader must clarify different national caveats, ROE, restrictions, and other units' characteristics. In addition, communicating the diversity of leadership styles of others and contingent leaders' authority to act is important.

Participants in the group interview indicated that communication must be done in a certain manner. For example, a leader should not communicate offensively or belittle subordinates, because that creates a divide in a multinational unit. According to some interviewees, different contingents have different expectations and prejudices about issues such as conscripts, reservists, homosexuals or women, therefore it is significant to clarify these differences and set appropriate expectations. Additionally, leaders and subordinates from all nations should communicate in both directions to explain and better understand national differences.

Communication about the diversity of national contingents is important, but a leader should not overemphasize these issues. Finding and promoting common things like common military values (duty, honor, and courage), shared interests, and universal common military culture can help a leader to downplay diversity and get buy in from all members of a multinational unit. It is also significant for a leader to stress equal status of all units involved in the multinational unit (Soeters 1997; Soeters and Bos–Bakx 2003). This can help the leader and all members to overcome prejudices about others, neutralize negative stereotypes, and get buy in. A leader's promotion of common identity such as, emphasizing that they are all strangers in a strange land, and paying equal respect to all members, helps build relationships and unit cohesion.

Multinational unit leaders should put strong effort into communicating common goals, purpose and direction of the mission, internal rules and standards, and providing expectations for all involved nations. A leader should stress some central issues and emphasize the joint character of the mission which should be seen as a super-ordinate goal for the multinational unit (Soeters and Bos–Bakx 2003, 283-294). A leader should also establish acceptable ethical behavior standards, internal procedures such as the way orders should be issued, leadership and communication style, discipline standards, and unacceptable behavior (expressing prejudice, belittlement, and disdain). These higher goals and internal rules should be realistic, as clear as possible, and set early. To get mutual respect and understanding, a leader should also explain why these goals and central issues are important. Due to language barriers it is important that a leader has control over understanding communicated issues through continuous assessment and back-briefs. A leader's initiative and constant pressure toward the desired common goals

is an important tool for a leader. A leader should frequently and consistently promote these common goals. The ambitions and goals of the whole multinational unit should be collectively shared among national contingents to get buy in and develop unit cohesion.

Participants in the group interview pointed out that the majority of issues about differences can be solved through effective communication. According to the interviewees a leader should explain the reason for setting internal rules and common goals in a respectful manner and most people will understand that. Some interviewees opined that a leader must set conditions and standards, and communicate them to subordinates to achieve common understanding of the desired higher goal and to create a commonality. Several interviewees stressed the significance of communicating the leaders' expectations of subordinates, units' expectations of a leader, and setting standards all should follow, because national units have different backgrounds. One interviewee pointed out that a leader should explain why decisions are made in the spirit of the higher goal and common mission purpose, so the subordinates get the perception of equality. Additionally, leaders who effectively communicate the uncertain nature of operations can reduce the negative stress which is present in a multinational environment.

Language cannot be overstated as an important contributor or inhibitor to cohesion. Language proficiency falls into the category of regional competence. Study of a language facilitates gaining insight into another culture, development of CQ in any cultural setting, and knowledge of basic phrases can help build trust between units (Stavridis and Howard 2010, 3; Watson 2010, 93-97). Unfortunately, military cultures are prone to using acronyms and certain language phrases. Some NATO countries especially, have a tendency to use many acronyms creating difficulties for non-NATO countries to



understand. A leader of a multinational unit should use clear, simple language (usually English) and avoid using acronyms and abbreviations as much as possible.

Some interviewees mentioned that it is helpful when people try to learn some basic language phrases for the other contingents' language because this effort shows respect towards others and it is a force multiplier. One interviewee stressed that language issues are easier to resolve than cultural differences, because a leader can always use translators, whereas another's culture can be more difficult to fully discern.

National units gather lots of information on missions and they should share it among all participants in a multinational unit. This contributes to mutual respect and trust, and promotes equal status of units. Multinational unit leaders can resolve some of the information sharing issues by sharing it before it goes to the higher headquarters and is classified. Conversely, Bensahel argues that problems with information sharing can never be resolved, because excessive information sharing slows down the operation tempo and presents operational security risk. Additionally, coalition partners who provide relevant information often feel they do not receive anything in return (Bensahel 2003, 140).

Whenever problems arise, a leader should communicate and deal with them in such a manner as to not damage the reputation of the national contingent and enable them to comply. Discussing frictions is necessary to prevent problems from spiraling out of control. National contingent leaders should always be able to save face in front of others. According to the interviewees, even if a leader successfully communicates diversities and clarifies rules in a multinational unit, some problems may arise due to differing habits and rules of other nations. Several interviewees pointed out that a leader's preferred way

to deal with problems is to communicate these issues in a discrete way between contingent leaders. The interviewees also stressed the importance of having a timely response from the multinational unit leader to prevent problems growing into conflicts, avoiding public belittlement, and finding acceptable consensus. Therefore, a leader may need to negotiate on occasion. A continuous dialog among leaders and subordinates provides quick feedback, develops cohesion, and prevents problems.

Silvela similarly argues that influence is all about communication. The influential leader who wants to build trust between contingents must establish relationships with other nations, create a climate of dialogue, and engage them with honesty and sincerity without arrogance (2009, 111).

### Taking Action

Once a leader has successfully managed awareness, understanding, and communication, the final step is the leader's own actions. The leader's actions and qualities must reflect competence, and appropriate and flexible leadership style in order to build social and task cohesion in multinational units. Awareness, understanding and communication are not enough to foster multinational unit cohesiveness. A leader must take action to create a positive climate of equality, mutual respect and trust, tolerance for diversity, and patience. This will enable the multinational unit to produce a common culture based on similarities, cooperation and common goals.

The uncertainty and complexity of a multinational environment increase the importance of leadership skills. A leader must possess professional competence, high level of technical skills and confidence, and set an example to get buy in from subordinates of all contingents and build strong unit cohesion (Siebold 2006, 199;

Galantino 2003, 119–122). Confident and credible leaders who show commitment to work and gain trust from subordinates can foster unit cohesion. Subordinates will trust a leader when they perceive the leader's actions to be credible. This is important as without individual buy in, unit cohesion will not happen.

Similarly, some of the interviewees stressed that a leader must possess a high degree of professionalism and authority, but a leader must also take initiative quickly, because units tend to stick for themselves due to the unfamiliar environment, lack of knowledge, shame, and language barriers. A leader must take initiative, identify common values and goals, and set the right tone to empower positive adjustment toward common values and norms of the multinational unit (Reilly 2001, 60). According to the interviewees a leader should use every little detail (e.g. common doctrine, techniques and procedures, leadership philosophy) to establish interface between nations and create new values and internal norms.

Leaders should place significant effort toward inspiring members with common values regarding the super-ordinate goals of the mission, shared interests, preferred behaviors, common military values, and communication styles (Soeters and Bos–Bakx 2003). A leader, serving as an example, has an important role regarding the degree of subordinates' identification with new values. The higher the degree of identification with shared values, the stronger the multinational unit cohesion, commitment of soldiers, and perception of collective unit success (Grojean and Thomas 2006, 41-53).

It is worth mentioning that accepted common values and norms in fact represent discipline which contributes to stronger unit cohesion. A leader cannot achieve true discipline applying authoritative leadership style or intimidation. Authoritarian leaders

who abuse their authority are the highest risk for disintegration of a unit, because they decrease their inner power which is used by leaders to preserve unit cohesion (Arnejčič 2009, 28-29). A leader's authority should not be confused with an authoritarian leader's behavior. Such behavior can lead to undesirable effects such as distrust and disrespect among unit members and consequently to problems.

An important shared value of a multinational unit could be sense of duty and commitment to accomplishing tasks. According to some scholars, a climate which fosters sense of duty, accomplishment of tasks, fulfillment of goals, cooperation among members, and leader's consistency among the above contribute to unit cohesiveness (Siebold 2006, 199; Drucker 1990, 122). Some interviewees also pointed out that a leader must treat everyone equal as professionals, ensure his staff and units work respectfully with each other, and assess execution of orders to be successful in accomplishing tasks.

Some interviewees asserted that a leader must increase tolerance of contingent diversity among all subordinates and also leverage differences to benefit the multinational unit. Additionally, some interviewees stressed that the presence of a common goal in the multinational unit helps in addressing diversity (i.e. national caveats, ROE) and finding effective workarounds despite the differences. According to several interviewees, preconceived negative notions of a certain nation create obstacles to cooperation. Therefore, leaders need to encourage open-mindedness. The interviewees asserted that a leader must use capabilities, additional competencies, and genuine ideas of some nations and apply them accordingly for a common end state and to advantage the whole multinational unit. Once each unit feels distinguished in its role, subordinates

begin to feel as they have a higher common purpose toward the improvement of the multinational unit and achievement of super-ordinate goals.

Several interviewees mentioned that a leader must build mutual respect and trust through shared experiences. The interviewees opined that social bonding and common combat experiences, for example, bring multinational units together despite cultural differences. A leader must start with common training and social bonding in the first deployment stage because, unfortunately, not all nations receive similar training in their home countries. Common training creates shared experience, builds relationships, and increases the self-esteem and efficacy of each individual soldier which can help to increase individual desires to build multinational unit cohesion. Training and social bonding will hopefully also change perceptions. Preconceived notions will be replaced with positive perceptions. A leader puts the right amount of stress through common training and socialization on subordinates and tries not to go over the edge because that quickly results in additional negative stress. Additionally, a leader can also reduce negative stress through training to create a more equal level of tactical proficiency among all units.

Some interviewees pointed out that a leader has to find a way around potentially unbridgeable differences, for example, personnel issues (females, homosexuals), equipment incompatibility, and substantially differing national interests. If a leader is unsuccessful in resolving these differences he/she can expect problems. The key is a leader's respectful dealing with these issues, being neutral, and finding middle ground. The interviewees asserted that, for instance, if equipment incompatibility issues cannot be overcome, a leader should seek to find meaningful tasks for units which lack equipment.

As mentioned, a leader must not take sides with one contingent over another. A leader should organize the work load in a manner that allows equitable distribution of tasks and also risk taking in missions. One interviewee stressed that a leader is also responsible to harness a healthy level of competition among nations. In case the level of competition among contingents is too high, that can hinder the creation of cohesion in a multinational unit.

According to the interviewees, a leader must try to apply the rules equally to all contingents to build cohesion. Fortunately, people who are personally involved in building a new team will have a higher respect for new norms, values, and rules compared to individuals who come into a previously formed team which has its own climate and culture. Individuals, who join a functioning group later, are forced to accept standing group norms. In that case, their willingness to identify with and follow these group norms will be lower because they had no influence on these norms and they have a perception of norms being forced upon them. Contingents which join a multinational unit at approximately the same time, have the advantage of creating new common norms and rules and shaping the unit climate. Thus they are more apt to identify with the new unit norms and also develop a better understanding of their meaning.

A multinational unit cannot function without loyalty and trust. Lack of trust results in questioning leaders' decisions and hinders successful accomplishment of multinational unit missions. A competent, impartial, adaptable, and patient leader creates a positive climate of mutual respect and trust which is a result of socialization and common training, tolerance for diversity, common values and norms.

### Summary and Conclusions

This chapter presented the findings, assisted readers with understanding these findings, and prepared them for the recommendations in chapter 5. The conclusions derived in this chapter form the foundation of the researcher's recommendations in the final chapter of this thesis. Implemented recommendations should carry considerable weight when determining future possible actions of multinational unit leaders. Chapter 5 suggests recommendations for military institutions and future research areas in order to improve cohesion in multinational units and to achieve higher effectiveness in future operations.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

You must cultivate unity, cooperation, and mutual trust.

—Sri Sathya Sai Baba

#### Introduction

Chapter 4 presented the findings resulting from the research, answered the research questions, and prepared readers for the conclusions and recommendations. This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations synthesized from the analysis in chapter 4. Aside from the introduction this chapter contains four parts. The first part presents the interpretation of findings. The second part describes recommendations for military institutions facing the realities of today. The third part identifies recommendations for additional study. The final part provides conclusions and summarizes the thesis.

The purpose of this research was to address and examine the importance of unit cohesion and how it can be fostered in multinational units. This thesis identified numerous factors which significantly influence unit cohesion and performance, present great challenges for leaders, and contribute to complexity in a multinational setting. Synthesizing the findings from the document study and the oral group interview data this thesis developed a framework whose key factors include (1) the conditions that exist in cohesive units and (1) the qualities and the tools that might help leaders facilitate a small multinational unit's cohesion. Unit cohesion evolves from mutual loyalty, trust, and compatibility of norms, values, and goals of all unit members. Leadership in multinational units is different than leadership in homogeneous units in many areas. The



core thesis is that leaders may cultivate multinational unit cohesion if they exhibit interpersonal and emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and adaptable leadership style.

The research analysis in chapter 4 discussed several findings, although some answers to the research questions were complicated. The findings tend to support the core thesis. The research determined the meaning of unit cohesion and its importance. Further, the research described factors in the multinational environment and their implications on leadership and unit performance. The research showed that there is a need for leaders of multinational units to possess additional qualities beyond those required to lead homogeneous national units. It also shows that leaders need to adopt a flexible leadership style and the ability to employ multiple leadership styles. Lastly, research showed that a leader of a multinational unit should gain awareness, develop understanding, communicate, and take action in order to facilitate unit cohesion.

#### Interpretation of Findings

The findings emphasize that both, social and task aspects of cohesion are important, therefore both must be cultivated. This work will hopefully contribute to reducing a frequent argument among scholars as to which aspect of cohesion seems to be more important for unit effectiveness.

Participants in the group interview determined that the leader's role was the most important factor in developing unit cohesion. Likewise, Barton and Adler concluded that a leader has the largest influence on multinational unit cohesiveness and effectiveness (Barton in Adler 1999, 85-107). Multinational unit leaders represent a bond between primary national units and a larger secondary multinational organization. Achieving

effective unit performance through strong cohesion in a complex multinational setting is the ultimate test of leadership.

Fostering cohesion is a challenge for all leaders. Research has shown that multinational units are less cohesive than homogeneous units due to many differing factors. Cultural norms, among other specifics, play a large part in the mechanics and interpersonal relationships in multinational units. This work offered a broad collection of specifics in multinational units that complements previous scholarly works which too often focused only on a few factors.

Key to the multinational unit leaders' success is knowledge of how/when to adjust their own leadership styles, behavior, and approaches to accommodate the national differences. A good leader uses his qualities and the right tools to close the gap between cultural and organizational differences and builds a cohesive multinational unit. Leaders will be more successful if they keep an open mind for differences in culture, personality, and unit dynamics rather than just assuming that these differences are not important for consideration.

Future multinational leaders need not just military skills, but also new cultural competencies to be effective in an ever-changing multinational environment. The findings have implications for modifying military doctrine, training, and education of military personnel. It is also important that leaders receive more specialized and detailed training prior to deployment than other personnel. This is perhaps nothing new for some countries, but it does not appear to be an integral part of the military training of all nations. All militaries must ensure that their transformation, exercises, and security

cooperation programs prepare their personnel to operate effectively as part of a multinational unit.

The proposed framework provides a basis for leadership requirements in developing cohesive multinational units. The framework helps establish what steps leaders should undertake to facilitate cohesion. In this way this information can be used for quick application when leaders are faced with unfamiliar contingents and multinational complexity. The framework has implications for both training and for the decision aids designed for use by multinational units. Proper application of this framework is likely to promote not just multinational unit cohesion, but also a better performance, less conflicts, higher morale and effectiveness, and finally mission success.

#### Recommendations for Military Institutions

National militaries must increase their level of interoperability. The processes are already ongoing in NATO countries, but more problems arise in multinational units which consist of non-NATO contingents. On the lower tactical level there are many issues connected to incompatibility of communications, lack of basic soldier equipment to conduct missions, and diversity of techniques and operational procedures.

Military institutions should increase the level of CQ of leaders and soldiers, including cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. That will offer a basis for better understanding other nations before they are deployed together. Usually pre-deployment training involves some cultural awareness training, but it is focused primarily on the host nation culture. It must be also focused on the culture of all troops from contributing nations. Additionally, organizations should provide some basic language training on all languages from the other nations contributing troops to the multinational unit. Institutions

should enhance cultural education by incorporating it in the curriculum of military schools at all levels. Focused programs on cultural education will create skills for dealing with other cultures during multinational operations.

Militaries should increase common training with specific units that will later deploy together as a significant part of the pre-deployment training. Many times this is not realistic; therefore military organizations should at a minimum increase combined multinational exercises with nations seen as likely future partners in multinational units. Additionally, the organizations should make more effort to send leaders at all levels to exchange education programs to other military schools. Exchange programs enable future multinational unit leaders to become more adaptable, gain CQ, and exchange experiences.

Usually, there are limitations in time and resources for multinational unit training. Therefore, militaries should make some efforts to include cultural awareness training into all levels of domestic training. Additionally, militaries should also develop creative and innovative solutions to increase language proficiency and cultural understanding of the personnel. Mere cultural awareness is not sufficient.

Military organizations should include additional criteria in the area of leader selection for multinational units. Additional selection criteria could be CQ, ability to interact in heterogeneous groups, language skills, ability to adopt a flexible leadership style, etc.

Some types of behavior are universally considered wrong. Military organizations should define some basic broad principles of ethical behavior. These principles should take cultural and religious characteristics into consideration. That would greatly assist the

leaders in multinational units who, until now, had to decide individually what is acceptable. Once the standard multinational ethical principles and rules are established, then all contingents involved in multinational operations should follow them.

There are many lessons learned from multinational operations. Experiences and knowledge drawn from experienced leaders would be beneficial to all military forces. Use of these lessons learned is limited if they are not properly collected and disseminated among countries. NATO and other countries should make more effort to establish an international system of collection and dissemination of these lessons learned.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

In conclusion, this research provides the initial possible solutions or guidance that will help leaders improve cohesiveness in multinational units at a battalion level or lower. The conclusions also indicate some additional study areas and raises questions that were delimited from this study.

An area for possible future study is the size of the multinational units. Since this study was focused on a battalion level and below, further research could focus on higher tactical and operational levels. Higher level leaders may employ different leadership styles, have a higher authority to act, and organizational processes may be different.

Another possible research area is examination of the extent of current cultural education and training for leaders and soldiers in military educational institutions. It would be interesting to compare the level of cultural competence or CQ of particular national unit personnel with unit's and leader's performance in the context of multinational operations.

Further research might seek to identify the weight of factors other than leadership which influence the multinational unit cohesiveness. This thesis recognized a leader as the most important factor influencing multinational unit cohesion. Additional research might seek answers on the question of: What is the degree of influence of other factors, if the leadership was equal? By identifying the weight of other factors, one could rank the factors affecting unit cohesion.

Hofstede's dimensions and GLOBE research are very helpful in the research of culture and cultural differences. Further research might be focused on these dimensions. Is cohesion more difficult to build in multinational units comprised of contingents that come from individualistic societies or collectivistic societies? How the PD, uncertainty avoidance, and other dimensions affect multinational unit cohesion? Are military units from democratic societies more cohesive than the ones from more authoritarian societies?

Additionally, Hofstede's dimensions are based on research from the business environment. Obviously, some differences exist between business and military organizations and the situations in which they operate in. Understanding the complexity of multinational units, one should also consider additional cultural values. In military operations units also deal with violence, combat stress, and casualties. Attitudes towards these factors on the national, political, and organizational level and its influence on multinational unit cohesiveness could be an interesting future research area.

### Summary and Conclusions

The primary intent and goal of this thesis was to point out the importance of two human dimension factors, leadership and cohesion, in contemporary and future military operations. Modern military operations are becoming increasingly multinational in

character. According to the nature of missions it is very important to achieve a certain level of unit cohesiveness as soon as possible. An insufficient level of multinational unit cohesiveness represents risk of failure to achieve operational goals and consequential mission failure. This means endangering not just the multinational unit reputation, but also the reputation of national contingents.

Beyond question, future military operations will be multinational, therefore military organizations need leaders who know how to reach compromises, work in collaboration with other nations, and have the ability to build partnerships and strong cohesive multinational units comprised of people with many different opinions, values, and traditions. CQ alone does not ensure a leader's success in pursuit of improving multinational unit cohesiveness in the future. However, research has shown that a culturally incompetent leader is much more likely to fail and less likely to accomplish his leadership duties.

Military leadership in multinational units is affected by more factors and is more complex when compared to military leadership in homogeneous national units. Differences can decrease unit cohesion, while also facilitating creativeness, innovation, high quality solutions, and increase effectiveness. The frictions and difficulties that exist in national homogeneous units are multiplied in a multinational environment. In addition, new difficulties may arise that a leader never encountered in a domestic training environment. All issues a leader has to deal with regarding the multinational environment cannot be addressed in one publication and it would be fruitless to even attempt to answer every question that arises. These findings represent a basis of reference for proper

leadership decisions. A good leader knows how to combine theoretical recommendations with their own experiences from the past.

It should be clear that multinational units, whether in combat or peacekeeping operations, are an interesting, complex, and dynamic area of research. Applications of a leader's awareness and understanding of differences among national contingents will contribute to more efficient and effective coordination, reducing conflicts and facilitating multinational unit cohesion, which will consequentially result in greater success in future military missions. All leaders can benefit from increasing their ability to cooperate with other nations, bond, establish relationships and set common goals within multinational units. Although no two deployments or multinational units are exactly the same, the thesis author hopes that the outcomes of this thesis and guidance for leaders can be used within a larger context.



## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONS FOR ORAL GROUP INTERVIEW

1. What does unit cohesion mean to you and do you see cohesion as an important factor in the production of combat effectiveness?
2. Do you see the leader's role as an important factor in building cohesive units? Why, why not?
3. Would you agree respect and trust are prerequisites for strong cohesion?
4. Did you observe any challenges or advantages working with other nations in multinational units?
5. Did you experience any problems working with other nations (women, homosexuals, or conscripts, culture, language, religion, historic rivalries)?
6. How cohesive did you see your multinational unit compared to a homogeneous national unit?
7. What factors do you see influencing cohesion in multinational units?
8. Did other nations contribute new approaches to work or hinder your common performance as a multinational unit?
10. Did you find any nations really hard or easy to work with? Why?
11. Did you observe any common military culture and values among different nations?
12. Did your unit conduct training or establish any contacts with other nations units before deployment?
13. Did you observe differences in the accommodations for troops, food or other?
14. Did you experience any stress and how that affected if any on your multinational unit cohesion?
15. Did all units in a multinational unit work toward the same goal? Any national caveats or different ROE interpretation?
16. Did you establish good friendship, care of each other, and mutual help with personnel from other nations units?
17. How did you see the multinational unit commander, his competencies, attributes, and leadership style?
18. How did leaders deal with conflicts if they arose? How was the outcome perceived?
19. How in your opinion can a multinational unit leader facilitate unit cohesion?

## APPENDIX B

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS

These recommendations take into consideration the realities that leaders face while facilitating cohesive multinational units today. The intent here is to provide guidance that will help leaders improve their ability to build more cohesive units. These recommendations are intended to be broad, not restrictive. They are not intended to limit the leader's discretion or ability to lead in the multinational environment. Below are some suggestions for leaders of the multinational units.

Gain respect of multinational unit members. Demonstrate competence, professional behavior, and loyalty to military values to earn respect. Competence must be earned in the eyes of subordinates. Hold up as an example for to gain authority. Always demonstrate good will and positive attitude. A culture of mutual respect activates the acceptance of leadership and empowers teamwork.

Improve cultural intelligence. Increase self awareness about your own national and organizational culture, values, behavior, and leadership style. Build knowledge of the history and cultures of other nations. Be culturally aware and ask the right questions when operating with other nations. Train yourself and subordinates to be empathetic and adaptable. The leader's individual self preparation, self improvement, initiative, and inquisitiveness are critical contributors to success.

Know your multinational unit. Know units' national and organizational culture and understand how these factors influence behaviors, beliefs, and relationships with others. Know and understand the units' capabilities and characteristics. Build

relationships and get to know people and the way they do business. Show curiosity and interest in subordinates, regardless of nationality.

Develop a climate of mutual respect and trust. Respect the other nation's culture, religion, behavior, and customs. Take initiative and build relationships through mutual respect that supports loyalty and honesty among all nationalities. Encourage respect for other nationalities and their cultures. People who feel respected will be more motivated and invest more energy in their assignments. Encourage participation of all unit members, especially the quiet ones. Be active and extend influence beyond the national chain of command with full integration of national leaders to create unity of action. Mutual respect and trust create better discipline, work motivation, and performance.

Emphasize commonalities, neutralize differences. Discuss the existing differences within the multinational unit, but leverage them and promote acting as a single unit with shared interests. Find and build on similarities which serve to unify the multinational unit, like common military values, universal military culture, shared historical or cultural experiences. Enforce common rituals and habits and embrace professionalism.

Increase effective communication. Increase the ability to understand non-verbal communication and its meaning in other cultures. Improve language skills. Even a few phrases contribute enormously to establishing genuine contact and showing respect to other nations. Regardless of language barriers, everyone should be comfortable expressing ideas and communicating honestly and openly. Be prepared for a lower proficiency of English. Avoid using abbreviations or acronyms that others do not understand. Provide clear orders, provide translators, and allot time for additional explanations if needed.

Keep an open mind and remain flexible. Avoid prejudice and negative stereotypes based on past experiences. To be successful, be prepared to adapt behavior, leadership style, and use different approaches and remain patient regarding particular situations and dynamics of multinational units. Have the willingness to change and not assume there is only one right way to do things. The key is to have the ability to compromise and achieve a consensus. Negotiation may be a common mechanism to achieve mutual understanding and trust.

Be impartial. Promote equal status of all units when it comes to taking risks and receiving rewards. Equally demand full effort from all contingents at all times. Impartiality is extremely important in dealing with conflicts. A leader's neutrality enhances respect for the leader and increases the feeling of success, while also avoiding making the other nations feel inferior.

Promote shared success. Success of a component unit must be viewed as multinational unit success; failure of a component unit must be viewed as multinational unit failure. Explain the roles of subunits in multinational unit success. Provide troops a strong sense of common achievement—belief that their mission differs from others. Create a perception of uniqueness of the multinational mission because it increases feeling of success and pride within subunits. Focus on completing tasks by getting participation of all units.

Increase quality time spent together. Multinational units must train, plan, and operate together. Take the initiative and start early with common training to earn mutual respect and gain trust among subunits. Subunit's competence and readiness must be earned in the eyes of others. Social events and routine meetings can contribute to social

cohesion and create a friendly environment. Social events contribute to overcoming stereotypes, prejudices, and establishing good understanding and tolerance of others' customs and traditions.

Exercise authority. Understand granted authority and exercise it fully. Although contingents have a national chain of command responsible for discipline, a leader should not tolerate dysfunctional multinational units. Confront unethical behavior and establish an acceptable ethical code for all nations. Insist on discipline as an important prerequisite for cohesion. Have trust in the abilities and competence of subordinates and demand contingent leaders' responsibility for their actions.

Establish common goals and set clear norms. Common goals should be compatible with the national interests of participating nations to encourage multinational unit identity. Establish common internal operating procedures with clear norms and rules, and give expectations to subunits to develop a positive multinational unit climate of shared values. Avoid micromanaging, while retaining control of executing orders and ensuring all subunits are focused on a common goal.

Deal with problems immediately. Problems will arise, there is no doubt. Do not just ignore them as they will become conflicts. Be impartial, tactful, and respectful. Dealing early with problems that come from cultural and organizational differences, shows all members that the leader cares for them and contributes to the nation's perception of equality, increased leader's authority, and enacts a higher trust in the leader.

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